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In 1994, the National Education Commission on Time and Learning (NECTL) published "Prisoners of Time," an eye-opening study into how much schools are governed by the clock and calendar, and how families, administrators, and teachers are subsequently affected. This report expands and updates the 1994 report, adding informative questions and answers addressing a variety of critical issues in education, including time reform, instructional configurations, before- and after-school programs, school readiness, poverty, and technology; updated statistics; and current reports on five schools featured in the 1994 report for their unique educational programs and skillful use of time. (HTH)

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Prisoners of Time

Too Much to Teach Not Enough Time to Teach It

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Prisoners of Time

Too Much to Teach
Not Enough Time to Teach It

Prisoners of Time

TOO MUCH TO TEACH
NOT ENOUGH TIME TO TEACH IT

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The National Education Commission on Time and Learning

Expanded and Updated for 2000 by

Staff Development for Educators

WITH A STATEMENT BY

Jim Grant, Char Forsten, and Irv Richardson

A FOREWORD BY

Denis P. Doyle

AND AN EPILOGUE BY

John Hodge Jones

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For more information on Denis P. Doyle and John Hodge Jones, refer to their individual contributions to this publication.

Prisoners of Time

Statement by

JIM GRANT, CHAR FORSTEN, AND IRV RICHARDSON

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln identified Harriet Beecher Stowe as the "little woman who wrote the book that made this great war." In 1994, the National Education Commission on Time and Learning produced a groundbreaking report that, like *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, identified a group of people held prisoner within the confines of an antiquated, inequitable system. The obvious difference, of course, was that *Prisoners of Time* was not addressing human injustices suffered by slaves in antebellum South, but rather injustices suffered by twentieth-century educators and students at the hands of a much different culprit—time. And, like Harriet Beecher Stowe, the Commission helped spark a national conversation that, while not inciting civil war, called for necessary and vital action, which has since endeavored to bend the hands of time.

SDE's expanded and updated version of *Prisoners of Time* strives to keep alive this important call to action, and it shares with its audience the essence of the Commission's original report. It adds to it informative Q&A's, contributed by educators across the country, that address a variety of critical educational issues, including time reform, instructional configurations, before- and after-school programs, school readiness, poverty, and technology. In addition, this version provides related and updated statistics and includes current reports on five schools that were featured in the original document for their unique educational programs and skillful use of time. Finally, the selected annotated bibliography and recommended resources and organizations list provide numerous places from which readers can continue their exploration of time, learning, and school reform.

Join original Commission members Denis P. Doyle, author of the foreword; John Hodge Jones, author of the epilogue; SDE; and educators throughout the United States in releasing teachers and students from the confines of the clock.

Prisoners of Time Redux: So Much to Do, So Little Time

Comments by

DENIS P. DOYLE, FORMER MEMBER, NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION ON TIME AND LEARNING

In 1994, the National Commission on Time and Learning released its path-breaking report, *Prisoners of Time*. Unhappily, the nation is still a prisoner of time, but no longer because we do not know better. Thanks to the Commission's 1994 report and its supporting research, we know that most American students spend too little time learning compared to many students overseas. German and Japanese youngsters, for example, in four years of what we would call high school, experience more than 3,300 hours of academic learning and hold no after-school jobs. In contrast, the typical American student has about 1,800 hours of academic exposure. Where does the rest of the day go? Sports, driver education, clubs, the streets, and after-school jobs. These students are at risk.

Disadvantaged students are also at great risk. Children who come to school from homes with limited resources and intellectual stimulation are at a profound disadvantage as they try to master material already familiar to their more fortunate classmates. And the disadvantaged child usually finds that a weak beginning is compounded by years of struggle and frustration.

At issue, of course, is more than minutes, hours, and years. One point that education research overwhelmingly confirms is that "time on task" can make a difference. How much time is needed varies, however, from student to student. As is true of our children, so it is true of us adults. Most children, however, are held captive to a system that marches to a relentless drumbeat of clock and calendar. Most adults, on the other hand, can vary the time they take to learn or perform a task. A scratch golfer, for example, may take an occasional lesson, while a duffer needs regular lessons, and IBM's trainers redo their lesson plans if a critical mass of students doesn't "get it." As a general rule, adult learners fashion their time to the task, not their task to the time.

The prescription is conceptually simple: vary the treatment; hold results constant. In medicine, engineering, science, even religion, we accept this formulation. Some of us simply need more time—develop-

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mentally, intellectually, and socially—depending on our circumstances, predispositions, and/or temperament.

Yet for many years, mass education has suffered from a design flaw—the idea that time is a suitable proxy for learning. When similar students are similarly motivated and similarly situated, they often learn at the same pace. But rare is the classroom in which this occurs. The typical experience—one we have all shared—is the classroom that holds students of markedly different capacities and significantly different degrees of readiness and motivation. The child who enters first grade with limited or non-existent verbal and numeric skills is a child at risk. At the other end of the spectrum, a child from a bilingual home enters a second-language class with a running start. So, too, the daughter of an applied mathematician or the son of an accomplished artist begins school with experiences, knowledge, and understanding that give them a learning base from which to grow—a base many students do not, unfortunately, share.

We now know that time is the key learning variable—not intelligence, not curriculum, not standards, but time. *Prisoners of Time: Too Much to Teach; Not Enough Time to Teach It*, in addition to including the original 1994 report, attempts to address pivotal issues in education today. Through its various Q&A's and school features ("Is There a Better Way?" Updates), the 2000 report addresses time and learning by exploring alternative academic schedules (e.g., year-round education, extended school day, smaller class size, block scheduling, summer learning) and classroom configurations (e.g., looping, multiage, team teaching); our changing society; and other important topics facing educators, students, and parents today (e.g., technology, school-community relations, social promotion, standards).

As the Commission said in 1994, so it is now: for the past 150 years we have held time constant and let learning vary. We must now begin to hold learning constant and let time vary. Our future and our children depend on it.

Denis P. Doyle was a member of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning; was coeditor of the 1994 report, *Prisoners of Time*; and is the author of numerous books and articles. His most recent book, *Raising the Standard* (Corwin Press), was written with coauthor Susan Pimental. Doyle is the vice chairman and chief academic officer of SchoolNet (www@schoolnet.com). He can be reached by e-mail at denis@schoolnet.com.

Prisoners of Time

LEARNING IN AMERICA is a prisoner of time. For the past 150 years, American public schools have held time constant and let learning vary. The rule, only rarely voiced, is simple: learn what you can in the time we make available. It should surprise no one that some bright, hardworking students do reasonably well. Everyone else—from the typical student to the dropout—runs into trouble.

Time is learning's warden. Our time-bound mentality has fooled us all into believing that schools can educate all of the people all of the time in a school year of 180 six-hour days. The consequence of our self-deception has been to ask the impossible of our students. We expect them to learn as much as their counterparts abroad in only half the time. As Oliver Hazard Perry said in a famous dispatch from the War of 1812: "We have met the enemy, and they are [h]ours."

If experience, research, and common sense teach nothing else, they confirm the truism that people learn at different rates, and in different ways with different subjects. But we have put the cart before the horse: our schools and the people involved with them—students, parents, teachers, administrators, and staff—are captives of clock and calendar. The boundaries of student growth are defined by schedules for bells, buses, and vacations instead of standards for students and learning.

CONTROL BY THE CLOCK

The degree to which today's American school is controlled by the dynamics of clock and calendar is surprising, even to people who understand school operations:

- With few exceptions, schools open and close their doors at fixed times in the morning and early afternoon—a school in one district might open at 7:30 a.m. and close at 2:15 p.m.; in another, the

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school day might run from 8:00 in the morning until 3:00 in the afternoon.

- With few exceptions, the school year lasts nine months, beginning in late summer and ending in late spring.
- According to the National Center for Education Statistics, schools typically offer a six-period day, with about 5.6 hours of classroom time a day.
- No matter how complex or simple the school subject—literature, shop, physics, gym, algebra—the schedule assigns each an impartial national average of 51 minutes per class period, no matter how well or poorly students comprehend the material.
- The norm for required school attendance, according to the Council of Chief State School Officers, is 180 days. Eleven states permit school terms of 175 days or less; only one state requires more than 180.
- Secondary school graduation requirements are universally based on seat time—"Carnegie units," a standard of measurement representing one credit for completion of a one-year course meeting daily.
- Staff salary increases are typically tied to time—to seniority and the number of hours of graduate work completed.
- Despite the obsession with time, little attention is paid to how it is used: in 42 states examined by the Commission, only 41 percent of secondary school time must be spent on core academic subjects.

The results are predictable. The school clock governs how families organize their lives, how administrators oversee their schools, and how teachers work their way through the curriculum. Above all, it governs how material is presented to students and the opportunity they have to comprehend and master it.

This state of affairs explains a universal phenomenon during the last quarter of the academic year: as time runs out on them, frustrated teachers face the task of cramming large portions of required material into a fraction of the time intended for it. As time runs out on the teacher, perceptive students are left to wonder about the integrity of an instructional system that behaves, year-in and year-out, as though the last chapters of their textbooks are not important.

A Foundation of Sand

Unyielding and relentless, the time available in a uniform six-hour day and a 180-day year is the unacknowledged design flaw in American education. By relying on the time as the metric for school organization and curriculum, we have built a learning enterprise on a foundation of sand, on five premises educators know to be false.

STATISTICS

ACCORDING TO THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS (WWW.CCSSO.ORG):

- FORTY-EIGHT STATES REQUIRE FOUR OR MORE HOURS OF IN-SCHOOL TIME A DAY FOR GRADES 1-6.
- FOUR STATES REQUIRE FIVE OR MORE HOURS A DAY FOR GRADES 4-8.
- TWENTY-THREE STATES REQUIRE SIX OR MORE HOURS A DAY FOR GRADES 9-12.

TO LOCATE THESE STATISTICS, GO TO WWW.CCSSO.ORG; CLICK ON "PUBLICATIONS" (LEFT-HAND COLUMN); SCROLL DOWN TO "KEY STATE POLICIES ON K–12 EDUCATION: STANDARDS, GRADUATION ASSESSMENT, TEACHER LICENSURE, TIME AND ATTENDANCE" (THESE ARE 1998 FINDINGS. YOU MUST HAVE ADOBE ACROBAT READER IN ORDER TO VIEW THIS DOCUMENT.)

Q We are no longer living in an agrarian society, so why are schools still following schedules set during our agricultural days?

A While there is no single reason that most schools continue to follow the agrarian school calendar, our homeostatic nature probably influences society's resistance to change a system that has been in place for over 150 years. Perhaps a statement a colleague once shared says it best: "The status quo can stand on its own merit, even when there isn't any."

Along with a resistance toward change, economic and cultural influences play a major role in maintaining and preserving the agrarian school calendar. Tourism, summer camps, and family vacations have simply replaced the former agricultural need to close schools for the summer. Many state and private economies depend heavily on the revenues generated from summer vacation activities, which have become as traditional as apple pie in this country.

As today's educators examine the factors that affect how students learn, in addition to the quality of education in our schools, many are questioning the traditional 180-day model that does not allow for time flexibility and tends to promote "covering curriculum" in a one-size-fits-all fashion. If we are truly committed to equity and excellence in education, we must examine and question all the factors that place limits on our ability to teach today's children, even if this means challenging our longstanding tradition of closing schools for the summer.

Q Do you think any teachers would be opposed to a longer school year and/or longer school day?

A Yes, I believe there are some teachers who have chosen or planned their careers based on the current 180-day school calendar who would probably not support a longer school day or year. However, I also believe that the majority of educators are willing to look at a longer year or school day, provided it does not involve doing more of the same, which is already not working. Respect, public and administrative support, planning time, involvement, and appropriate pay are critical ingredients to any discussion on the topic of lengthening the school day and year. There are numerous grassroots and national movements (e.g., National Association of Year-Round Schools) headed by educators who are looking at alternatives to our current instructional design. Implementing looping, multiage, and school-within-a-school models are examples of modified structures that allow for increased time for students, teachers, and parents to work together toward improved relationships and improved learning environments.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 26, 36, 46, 56, 69; school updates, pp. 23, 53, 75.

STATISTICS

"EDUCATION AT A GLANCE: OECD INDICATORS, 1996" (WWW.NCES.ED.ORG) REPORTS THAT THE AVERAGE CLASSROOM TIME PER DAY FOR GRADES 1–8 IS 5.32 HOURS, AND THE AVERAGE CLASSROOM TIME PER DAY FOR GRADES 9–12 IS 5.23 HOURS.

The first is the assumption that students arrive at school ready to learn in the same way, on the same schedule, all in rhythm with each other.

The second is the notion that academic time can be used for nonacademic purposes with no effect on learning.

Next is the pretense that because yesterday's calendar was good enough for us, it should be good enough for our children—despite major changes in the larger society.

Fourth is the myth that schools can be transformed without giving teachers the time they need to retool themselves and reorganize their work.

Finally, we find a new fiction: it is reasonable to expect "world-class academic performance" from our students within the time-bound system that is already failing them.

SCHOOL READINESS

Q What are the most important aspects of a child's readiness for school?[1]

A Readiness for school encompasses the physical, social/emotional, and intellectual realms, just as a child's overall development does. Obviously, there is a lot of overlap among these domains, and when they are working well together they can help propel a child to success. On the other hand, when one or more of these domains is interfering with others, it can prevent a child from achieving school success.

Important physical capabilities include the accurate vision and hearing that enable children to absorb information, and the motor skills that enable children to draw, write, and work with hands-on objects. Recent research on the brain has also confirmed that the growth and development of the brain can have a profound effect on children's ability to learn.

In the social/emotional area, young children should be able to separate from their parents or guardians and then start learning comfortably with educators and fellow classmates. They need to be able to work through the inevitable upsets and conflicts that occur in a group setting, and hopefully they will not be experiencing serious emotional problems outside of school that distract them from learning.

Intellectually, young children should know basic information about themselves and other family members, such as names, ages, where they live, and so forth. Children should also have some familiarity with the alphabet, single-digit numbers, and the names of colors and common household objects.

Children who have all these characteristics are well prepared for the methods and materials typically used in today's kindergartens. While these characteristics are not rigid requirements, and while today's educators need to be prepared to work effectively with young children who lack some or even many of them, it must also be understood that time spent helping some children learn basic information and skills leaves less time for these children to learn the grade-level material on which high standards are based.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 19, 28, 29, 77; school update, p. 43.

[1] Reprinted with permission from: Jim Grant, *Developmental Education in an Era of High Standards*. (Rosemont, NJ: Modern Learning Press, 1998), 12.

CURRICULUM ADD-ONS

***Q** Are curriculum add-ons hurting our chances of reaching high standards?*

A Yes. Classroom teachers are burdened with being required to single-handedly tackle solving every societal ill. Whenever a problem arises in society, there seems to be an unspoken assumption by parents, clergy, and community that it's the schools' responsibility to fix it. The "new work of the schools" includes:

- Manners Education
- Alcohol and Drug Prevention
- Head lice Prevention
- Sex Education
- Plant-a-Tree Program
- Poison Prevention Program
- Handgun Safety
- Earthquake Safety
- Flood Safety
- Tornado Safety
- Hurricane Safety
- Nay, Nay, Stay Away from 900 Numbers Program
- Nutrition Education
- Electrical Hazard Safety
- Fire Safety Program
- Online Pornography Education
- Aluminum Recycling
- Divorce Education
- Death Education
- AIDS Education
- Emergency Numbers Program
- Gunfire Safety Program
- Suicide Prevention Program
- Sex Abuse Prevention Program
- Alternative Family Education
- Air and Water Pollution Prevention
- Garbage Recycling Education
- Tolerance Education
- Lead Poisoning Program
- Be Kind to Animals Week
- Personal Hygiene Help
- Lightning Safety Program
- Mine and Cave Safety Program
- Carbon Monoxide Safety Program
- Acid Rain Education
- Save the Owl
- Save the Whale
- Bee Awareness Week
- CPR/Heimlich Maneuver Training
- Energy Conservation
- Personal Safety
- Save the Rainforest
- Homeless Education Awareness Program
- Multicultural Awareness
- Violence Prevention Programs
- Sexual Harassment Education
- Don't Speak to Strangers Program
- Gender Equity Education
- Restitution Education
- Conflict Resolution
- Responsibility Training
- Lyme Disease Prevention Education
- Firecracker Safety Education
- Condom Education
- Drown-Proofing Education
- Toy Safety Program
- Frostbite Prevention Education
- Character Education
- Safe Sledding Education
- Safe Ice Program
- Practice "Safe Sun" Education
- "Just Say No to Satan" Program
- "Just Say No to Kissing"
- Snowplow Safety
- Railroad Crossing Education

Educators and students are expected to achieve high standards while also attempting to address every societal issue that appears on the evening news. But remember the wise words of a Yankee farmer: "You can't ride one horse in two directions at the same time." Yet that is exactly what teachers and students are expected to do. There is no doubt these issues demand attention, but they demand the *entire community's* attention, not just that of educators and a handful of concerned parents.

What can school officials do? The answer is fairly—although never entirely—simple: "Subtraction Education." Schools can no longer afford to steal valuable instructional time from their already compacted school hours. Eject these mini-units from the core curriculum, and reconvene discussion in a public forum organized by your school board.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 31, 63.

These five assumptions are a recipe for a kind of slow-motion social suicide.

The Realities of the Global Economy

In our agrarian and industrial past, when most Americans worked on farms or in factories, society could live with the consequences of time-bound education. Able students usually could do well and accomplish a lot. Most others did enough to get by and enjoyed some modest academic success. Dropouts learned little but could still look forward to productive unskilled and even semi-skilled work. Society can no longer live with these results.

The reality of today's world is that the global economy provides few decent jobs for the poorly educated. Today, a new standard for an educated citizenry is required—a standard suited to the twenty-first century, not the nineteenth or the twentieth. Americans must be as knowledgeable, competent, and inventive as any people in the world. All of our citizens, not just a few, must be able to think for a living. Indeed, our students should do more than meet the standard; they should set it. The stakes are very high. Our people not only have to survive amidst today's changes, they have to be able to create tomorrow's.

The approach of a new century offers the opportunity to create an education system geared to the demands of a new age and a different world. In the school of the future, learning—in the form of high, measurable standards of student performance—must become the fixed goal. Time must become an adjustable resource.

STATISTICS

REVIEW OF VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS INDICATES THAT THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF MINUTES PER CLASS PERIOD SPANS 45-51 MINUTES.

THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS (WWW.CCSSO.ORG) REPORTS THAT 180 DAYS REMAINS THE NATIONAL AVERAGE FOR LENGTH OF SCHOOL TERM. THIRTEEN STATES PERMIT SCHOOL TERMS OF 175 DAYS OR LESS, AND ONLY ONE STATE REQUIRES MORE THAN 180 DAYS.

Limited Time Frustrates Aspirations for Reform

For the past decade, Americans have mounted a major effort to reform education—an effort that continues today, its energy undiminished. The reform movement has captured the serious attention of the White House, Congress, state capitals, and local school boards. It has enjoyed vigorous support from teachers and administrators. It has been applauded by parents, the public, and the business community. It is one of the major issues on the nation's domestic agenda and one of the American people's most pressing concerns.

Today, the reform movement is in the midst of impressive efforts to reach National Education Goals by defining higher standards for content and student achievement and by framing new systems of accountability to ensure that schools educate and students learn. These activities are aimed at comprehensive education reform—improving every dimension of schooling so that students leave school equipped to earn a decent living, enjoy the richness of life, and participate responsibly in local and national affairs.

As encouraging as these ambitious goals are, this Commission is convinced that we cannot get there from here with the amount of time

GRADE-LEVEL RETENTION

Q What is grade-level retention, and why is it a necessary alternative for some elementary school children? [1]

A Retention is an educational intervention used to correct *wrong grade placement*—putting a child in a particular grade when the child is not yet ready to succeed in that grade. Retaining the child "in grade" for a second year provides the additional learning and growing time that some children need in order to *complete* the grade successfully and then move up to the next level.

There are three primary reasons that children end up being placed in the wrong grade. The main reason is that some children are *developmentally young* compared to other children of the same age. Developmentally young children can learn very successfully if given an additional year to develop in a supportive educational environment, but they are at great risk for failure if pressured to achieve and behave in ways that are virtually impossible for them at their current stage of development. A second reason is that the use of a single, arbitrary, and inflexible school-entrance cutoff date results in a certain number of children being *chronologically younger* by almost a full year than the oldest students in a class, and this substantial disadvantage makes it far more difficult for many of the younger children to meet grade-level requirements. A third reason is that some children lack the prerequisite knowledge and skills to succeed in a grade due to their *personal backgrounds*, which may include an extended illness or simply a lack of exposure to basic information and skills. These children need additional time to learn what other children of the same age already know or are expected to know.

For any of these reasons, spending an additional year in a grade may be the *only* way for a child to gain the knowledge and skills needed to complete the grade and meet high standards. When used in this way, retention is not a punishment or a judgement of the child; it is an adjustment and correction of inflexible regulations and difficult decisions made by educators and parents.

Decades of experience have shown that retention puts numerous children "back on track" by providing them with an opportunity to master material that they previously were unable to handle. These children then feel good about themselves as students and as individuals because they know that they can and do learn successfully, rather than continually struggling and failing and then feeling "dumb," inadequate, and resentful as a result.

Of course, there are some children for whom retention is *not* appropriate. And there are many children for whom retention *alone* is not enough, because they need other interventions along with additional learning and growing time. Educators and parents therefore have a responsibility to make informed decisions about children's initial grade placement and the use of time-flexibility options, such as retention.

For related topic, see Q&A, p. 77.

[1] Reprinted with permission from: Grant, *Developmental Education*, 71.

***Q** Explain the importance of implementing standards.*

A Academic standards are a fair and effective way to give students the "rules of the game" when they are in school. By comparing your child's performance to a fixed standard, parents, children, and teachers all know precisely what is expected. Every time the child attempts a task, the performance is compared to the standard—not to the performance of other children. The most important advantages for children and their parents are fairness, clarity, and improved learning. Standards are fair because the child knows what must be accomplished before the task is attempted. In a non-standards system, when the performance of one child is compared to that of other children, a student never knows if s/he has succeeded until AFTER his/her performance is compared to that of other students. In a standards-based system, the rules are clear: I either meet the standard or I don't. If I don't meet the standard, I get to try again.

By the way, it's worth noting that standards are hardly a new and revolutionary idea. In every school in the country, there are athletic teams and musical groups that routinely take a "standards-based" approach to education. When students fail to make a free throw in basketball or hit the F-sharp in band, they do not automatically receive a lower grade in those subjects. Rather, those students get immediate feedback that they did not "meet the standard" and then use that feedback to improve their performance. Essentially, the standards movement asks parents, teachers, and students to apply the same techniques to English and algebra classes that we have long applied to other subjects about which we care deeply.

***Q** How can teachers incorporate standards into their everyday instruction? In other words, how can a teacher teach standards in informative, meaningful ways?*

A Teachers first have an obligation to make their expectations clear BEFORE giving students work. This is the heart and soul of a standards-based approach to teaching. Second, teachers in a standards-based environment have an obligation to ask this question of every classroom activity: Is this use of classroom time helping my students to meet the academic content standards of my state? A careful response to this question would eliminate an enormous amount of activity in many classrooms that are familiar to the teacher—perhaps to generations of teachers—but that are essentially wasteful of time and energy. Third, teachers in a standards-based classroom insist that their feedback must be respected. Teacher feedback is respected only when students use it to improve performance. This means that teacher evaluation is not the "final word" in assessing student performance; rather, it is always a means to improve student performance.

A teacher is a coach, not merely an evaluator. A teacher is a guide, not merely an instructor. In sum, standards provide better information, better performance, and more encouragement for students. Standards foster more respect for teachers. Standards provide more information for parents.

For related topic, see Q&A, p. 51.

now available and the way we now use it. Limited time will frustrate our aspirations. Misuse of time will undermine our best efforts.

Opinion polls indicate that most Americans, and the vast majority of teachers, support higher academic standards. Some, however, fear that rigorous standards might further disadvantage our most vulnerable children. In our current time-bound system, this fear is well founded. Applied inflexibly, high standards could cause great mischief.

But today's practices—different standards for different students and promotion by age and grade according to the calendar—are a hoax, cruel deceptions of both students and society. Time, the missing element in the school reform debate, is also the overlooked solution to the standards problem. Holding all students to the same high standards means that some students will need more time, just as some may require less. Standards are then not a barrier to success but a mark of accomplishment. Used wisely and well, time can be the academic equalizer.

Time: Not a New Issue

The federal government, concerned about student achievement in the United States, directed this Commission to conduct a comprehensive examination of the broad relationship between time and learning. Time is not a new issue in the education debate, but an age-old concern. As our work progressed, we realized that a report published precisely a century ago is painfully relevant to our inquiry.

In 1894, U.S. Commissioner of Education William T. Harris argued in his annual report that it was a great mistake to abandon the custom of keeping urban schools open nearly the entire year. He complained of a "distinct loss this year, the average number of days of school having been reduced from 193.5 to 191," and wrote:

> *[T]he constant tendency [has been] toward a reduction of time. First, the Saturday morning session was discontinued; then the summer vacations were lengthened; the morning sessions were shortened; the afternoon sessions were curtailed; new holidays were introduced; provisions were made for a single session on stormy days, and for closing the schools to allow teachers . . . to attend teachers' institutes.*
>
> *The boy of today must attend school 11.1 years in order to receive as much instruction, quantitatively, as the boy of fifty years ago received in 8 years. . . It is scarcely necessary to look further than this for the explanation for the greater amount of work accomplished. . . . in the German and French than in the American schools.*

Published 100 years ago, that document could have been issued last week.

STATISTICS

A 1997 STUDY BY MARIANNE PERIE, ET AL., REPORTED THAT IN THE 1993-1994 SCHOOL YEAR, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS SPENT 68 PERCENT OF THEIR TIME (22 HOURS A WEEK) ON CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS. [FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE "TIME SPENT TEACHING CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: COMPARISONS ACROSS COMMUNITY, SCHOOL, TEACHER, AND STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS"—STATISTICAL ANALYSIS REPORT, 1997. YOU MAY CONDUCT A SEARCH FOR THIS DOCUMENT ON ERIC (WWW.ASKERIC.ORG)].

The Imperative for an American Transformation

What lies before the American people—nothing short of reinventing the American school—will require unprecedented effort. This report concludes with several recommendations about time. The simple truth, however, is that none of them will make much difference unless there is a transformation in attitudes about education.

The transformation we seek requires widespread conviction in our society that *learning matters*. Learning matters, not simply because it leads to better jobs or produces national wealth, but because it enriches the human spirit and advances social health.

THE KEY TO LIBERATED LEARNING LIES IN UNLOCKING TIME.

The human ability to learn and grow is the cornerstone of a civil and humane society. Until our nation embraces the importance of education as an investment in our common future—the foundation of domestic tranquility and the cure for our growing anxiety about the civility of the society—nothing will really change.

Certainly nothing will change as long as education remains a convenient whipping boy camouflaging larger failures of national will and shortcomings in public and private leadership.

As people, we are obsessed with international economic comparisons. We fail to acknowledge that a nation's economic power often depends on the strength of its education system. Parents, grandparents, employers—even children—understand and believe in the power of learning. The strongest message this Commission can send to the American people is that education must become a new national obsession, as powerful as sports and entertainment, if we are to avoid a spiral of economic and social decline.

But if this transformation requires unprecedented national effort, it does not require unprecedented thinking about school operations. Common sense suffices: American students must have more time for learning. The six-hour, 180-day school year should be relegated to museums, an exhibit from our education past. Both learners and teachers need more time—not to do more of the same, but to use all time in new, different, and better ways. The key to liberated learning lies in unlocking time.

UPDATE: *Beyond the 180 Days*

BEACON SCHOOL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

LOCATED IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, Beacon Preschool-Extended Middle School (year-round) and Beacon High School (extended-year) offer a unique, private-school experience—increased-learning-time programs in which students work in peer teams based on developmental and skill levels, rather than by age. There is no tracking.

Why a year-long program? States Linda Remington, director of development at Beacon, "We are no longer living in an agricultural society, so there is no need to try to fit everything into 180 days."

The benefits of Beacon's year-long schedule, also discussed in the 1994 report, are many. One advantage, of course, is increased learning time. The 220 students enrolled in Beacon's Preschool-Extended Middle School program receive 240 days of instruction per year, an increase of sixty days over the traditional 180-day calendar by which most U.S. schools operate. This increased learning time allows for greater core instruction, which at Beacon is heavily integrated with the arts. (Students receive instruction from local artists for 6–8 hours a week in music, dance, drama, and the fine arts.) In addition, the year-long program allows and encourages families to spend more time together, as students are not given homework before grade seven.

A second advantage is flexibility. With the exception of a scheduled one-week, whole-school vacation in August and a two-week, whole-school vacation during the holidays, families may schedule vacations based on family needs at any time during the year. Teachers also enjoy the advantages of this school schedule through Beacon's innovative "Flex" program. The Flex program brings new accredited teachers into established teachers' classrooms to assist with instruction during the academic day. Every six weeks, two or more Beacon teachers leave for vacation or teacher training, at which time the Flex teachers—familiar with the students, the curriculum, and the class and school schedules—take over all instruction. No substitutes are necessary, and no learning time is lost.

Beacon High School operates on a 210-day, mid-September through July extended-year program. The year is divided into trimesters, and periods of instruction last for 105 minutes each. This block scheduling and extended year allow the high school's 60–70 students to work intensively and to complete meaningful projects. As in Beacon's preschool-middle school, the high school curriculum is heavily influenced by the arts, and technology instruction is incorporated into every course, with students regularly working on collaborative Silicon Valley firm/school projects.

The regular school day for both schools runs from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with extended-care hours opening the preschool-middle school doors at 7:30 a.m. and keeping them open until 6:00 p.m. In addition, both schools boast small student-teacher ratios and class sizes (no more than 18 students per room in the preschool-middle school and no more than 20 students per room in the high school).

FOR MORE INFORMATION on Beacon's year-round and extended-year programs, write or call: Linda Remington, Director of Development, Beacon School, 2101 Livingston Street, Oakland, CA 94606; Ph: (510) 437-2315.

Dimensions of the Time Challenge

THERE IS AN URGENCY about the issue of time and learning that is felt by the public but not yet reflected in the responses of many education officials. On these issues, the American people may be ahead of their schools.

Opinion polls reviewed by the Commission reveal a revolution in public attitudes about time, schools, and the role of schools in the community. According to the findings of recent polls:

- After nearly 40 years of opposing a longer school year, 52 percent of Americans today favor students' spending more time in school.
- A plurality favors increasing the number of days in the year, as opposed to the number of hours in the day (47 versus 33 percent).
- A large majority (62 percent) supports providing after-school care for the children of working parents.
- Americans have reached a national consensus on the importance of preschool programs to help low-income and minority children get ready for school (85 percent support).

Public opinion experts also report that when Americans are asked to identify their worries about elementary and secondary education, their primary concern is the quality of education provided to their children. Harnessed then, in the public mind, are two powerful forces for reform: a belief that the paramount issue in American education is quality, and a dawning consensus, just now being articulated, that school time, broadly conceived, is quality's ally.

The response of America's education leaders to the imperative for school reform is impressive. Both Presidents Bush and Clinton were early advocates of adopting ambitious National Education Goals (see sidebar, next page). These goals enjoy bipartisan support in Congress and in statehouses. The National Council on Education Standards and Testing called in 1992 for the development of new learning standards for all students and voluntary national tests to reinforce them. The

STATISTICS

THE 28TH ANNUAL PHI DELTA KAPPA/GALLUP POLL FOUND THAT 60 PERCENT OF THOSE POLLED WERE IN FAVOR OF LENGTHENING THE SCHOOL YEAR OR DAY. THIRTY-SEVEN PERCENT WERE OPPOSED TO EXTENDING THE SCHOOL YEAR OR DAY AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL. AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL, 49 PERCENT WERE IN FAVOR OF A LONGER SCHOOL DAY OR YEAR, AND 48 PERCENT WERE OPPOSED.

THE POLL ALSO REPORTED THAT NONWHITES, BLACKS, AND COLLEGE GRADUATES WERE MORE IN FAVOR OF EXTENDING THE SCHOOL YEAR/DAY AT BOTH LEVELS THAN ANY OTHER DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

National Education Goals

IN 1989, THE NATION'S GOVERNORS adopted six national education goals, which were incorporated into "Goals 2000": Educate America Act. The Goals 2000 legislation ultimately defined eight goals:

BY THE YEAR 2000:

1. **School Readiness**: All children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. **School Completion**: The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
3. **Student Achievement and Citizenship**: American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter—including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography—[and leave school] prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.
4. **Teacher Education and Professional Development**: The nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to . . . prepare . . .students for the next century.
5. **Mathematics and Science**: U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.
6. **Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning**: Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
7. **Safe, Disciplined, and Alcohol- and Drug-Free Schools**: Every school in America will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.
8. **Parental Participation**: Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

Q *Describe year-round education.*

A Year-round education (YRE) is a concept that reorganizes the school year to provide more continuous learning. It accomplishes this by breaking up the long summer vacation into short, more frequent vacations throughout the year. It does not eliminate summer vacation, but reduces it to no more than eight weeks. Bear in mind that year-round education is an alternative schedule for learning, not an alternative curriculum for learning.

There are three different forms of year-round education—single track, multi-track, and extended year.

- Single-track YRE is put into place primarily for its educational value. It is not meant to save space, and it is utilized primarily to provide a more continuos period of instruction. It minimizes the learning loss that occurs during a two- or three-month vacation. Students and all school personnel follow the same schedule. Single-track does not reduce school size, nor does it allow a school to accommodate more students.
- Multi-track YRE is used primarily to alleviate overcrowding, although it also incorporates the educational values of single-track YRE. Students are divided into groups and attend school on alternating patterns of attendance and vacation.
- Extended year YRE actually lengthens the school year substantially from the usual 180 days of instruction. Over 100 schools in the United States have initiated the extended year.

Q *What are the advantages of year-round schools?*

A The following advantages are cited most often by advocates of YRE:

- Reduced summer learning loss
- More continuous instruction
- Quicker diagnosis and intervention of student learning problems
- Higher student attendance
- Higher teacher attendance and fewer substitute days
- Fewer dropouts
- Reduced in-school vandalism
- Fewer discipline referrals

Q *Describe the different year-round schedules.*

A There are dozens of ways to organize the school year. Consider the following:

- Currently, state legislatures are requiring 175-185 school days out of a year's 365 days. Thus, one can quickly see that students are required to attend school no more than one-half of each year.
- Year-round calendars go by names like 40/10, 45/15, 60/10, 60/15, 60/20, 90/30, Concept 6, Modified Concept 6, and the like. The two most used are the 45/15 and 60/20 calendars.
- The 45/15 calendar is really a quarter system. Students attend 45 school days (9 weeks), followed by 15 school days of vacation (3 weeks). A sequence of this pattern four times a year satisfies the legislative requirement of 180 days or so of instruction.
- The 60/20 calendar is really a trimester system. Students attend school in blocks of 60 school days (Monday through Friday), followed by 20 school days of vacation, called intersession (3 months).

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 15, 26, 36, 46, 56, 69, school updates, pp. 23, 53, 75.

content standards movement sweeping American education promises to revolutionize learning.

Based on its 24-month investigation, however, the Commission is convinced that five unresolved issues present insurmountable barriers to these efforts to improve learning. They define the dimensions of the time challenge facing American schools:

- The fixed clock and calendar is a fundamental design flaw that must be changed.
- Academic time has been stolen to make room for a host of nonacademic activities.
- Today's school schedule must be modified to respond to the great changes that have reshaped American life outside school.
- Educators do not have the time they need to do their job properly.
- Mastering world-class standards will require more time for almost all students.

THE DESIGN FLAW

Decades of school improvement efforts have foundered on a fundamental design flaw, the assumption that learning can be doled out by the clock and defined by the calendar. Research confirms common sense. Some students take three to six times longer than others to learn the same thing. Yet students are caught in a time trap—processed on an assembly line scheduled to the minute. Our usage of time virtually ensures the failure of many students.

Under today's practices, high-ability students are forced to spend more time than they need on a curriculum developed for students of moderate ability. Many become bored, unmotivated, and frustrated. They become prisoners of time.

Meanwhile, struggling students are forced to move with the class and receive less time than they need to master the material. They are penalized with poor grades. They are pushed on to the next task before they are ready. They fall further and further behind and begin living with a powerful dynamic of school failure that is reinforced as long as they remain enrolled or until they drop out. They also become prisoners of time.

What of the "average" students? They get caught in the time trap as well. Conscientious teachers discover that the effort to motivate the most capable and help those in difficulty robs them of time for the rest of the class. Typical students are prisoners of time, too.

The paradox is that the more the school tries to be fair in allocating time, the more unfair the consequences. Providing equal time for students who need more time guarantees unequal results. If we genuinely intend to give every student an equal opportunity to reach high academic standards, we must understand that some students will require unequal amounts of time (i.e., they will need additional time).

STATISTICS

ACCORDING TO *YEARBOOK 2000*:

- THE DISPARITY BETWEEN INCOME LEVELS CONTINUES TO GROW AT AN ALARMING RATE, WITH THE TOP 5 PERCENT OF AMERICAN FAMILIES MAKING AN ASTOUNDING TWENTY TIMES THE AVERAGE INCOME OF THE BOTTOM ONE-FIFTH OF FAMILIES (3).
- ONE-FIFTH OF TODAY'S CHILDREN—36 PERCENT OF BLACK CHILDREN VERSUS 15.1 PERCENT OF WHITE CHILDREN—IS BORN INTO POVERTY (6).
- OUT OF TWENTY-FOUR INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS, THE U.S. IS THE ONLY ONE THAT FAILS TO OFFER UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE/INSURANCE AND PAID MATERNAL/PARENTAL LEAVE (XIV).
- THE U.S. STANDS FIRST AMONG INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS FOR YOUTH DYING BY FIREARM (XV).

STATISTICS

AS REPORTED BY THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND (CDF) IN *YEARBOOK 2000: THE STATE OF AMERICA'S CHILDREN*, A SEPTEMBER 1999 SURVEY BY THE CHARLES STEWARD MOTT FOUNDATION AND J.C. PENNEY CORPORATION FOUND THAT OF THOSE AMERICAN VOTERS POLLED, 86–92 PERCENT FELT THAT AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS WERE IMPORTANT AND NECESSARY FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS (50).

One response to the difficulty of juggling limited time to meet special needs has been the development of "pull-out programs," in which students needing reinforcement or more advanced work are "pulled out" of the regular classroom for supplemental work. Attractive in theory, these programs, in practice, replace regular classroom time devoted to the same subject. They add little additional time for learning. Students deserve an education that matches their needs every hour of the school day, not just an hour or two a week. Pull-out programs are a poor part-time solution to a serious full-time problem.

ACADEMIC TIME AND NONACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The traditional school day, originally intended for core academic learning, must now include a whole set of requirements for what has been called "the new work of the schools"—education about personal safety, consumer affairs, AIDS, conservation and energy, family life, driver's training—as well as traditional nonacademic activities, such as counseling, gym, study halls, homeroom, lunch, and pep rallies. The school day, nominally six periods, is easily reduced at the secondary level to about three hours of time for core academic instruction.

Most Americans believe these activities are worthwhile. But where do schools find the time? Within a constrained school day, it can only come from robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Time lost to extracurricular activities is another universal complaint of educators. A 1990 survey of Missouri principals indicated that student activities can deny students the equivalent of seven school days a

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

***Q** What is universal preschool? How would universal preschool help students in this era of high standards?*

A Universal preschool suggests that all three- and four-year-old children in a district should have access to free early childhood education. These schools are subsidized by a state's department of education, which typically allocates special funding for economically poor, special needs districts. Clearly, preschool teachers in all early childhood settings, and especially those in special needs preschools, should be trained in a state's curriculum standards so they can align their own early childhood curriculum and teaching to those standards. For example, skills such as comprehension, number sense, comparing, judging, scientific method, and classification are part of every state's standards and should receive important emphasis in a preschool curriculum. Similarly, a study of topics such as animal diversity, plants, weather, seasons, and transportation are also included in the standards and should be part of all early childhood learning experiences. Children are more likely to score higher on third- or fourth-grade statewide tests based on standards if they begin to experience the skills and topics included in the standards by age three.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 16, 20.

ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

***Q** Students in kindergarten are still very young, and they seem tired from the half-day of school they have already attended. Wouldn't an all-day kindergarten program just wear them out?*

A A 2.5–hour, half-day kindergarten program may be a thing of the past. Because many kindergarten teachers are expected to teach what was twenty years ago a first-grade curriculum, half-day programs are inadequate and rushed. All-day programs, however, should not invite more curriculum; rather, they should address that instruction once compressed into 2.5 hours and teach it over an expanded amount of time, using developmentally appropriate practices. In addition, a longer day allows five- and six-year-olds of all ability levels to process and expand their learning. This is done through engaging, developmentally appropriate, hands-on activities.

Although a longer day can be tiring for both students and teacher, an all-day program incorporates time for instruction, exploration, and rest. A quality kindergarten is education disguised as fun!

***Q** Describe what a comprehensive all-day kindergarten program might look like.*

A The ideal all-day kindergarten would start the year by having students attend a half-day program (9:00–12:00) for the first two months. At the beginning of the third month, one hour is added, extending the day from 9:00–1:00. The fourth month adds another hour, expanding the day from 9:00–2:00. After winter break, students attend full-day sessions.

During the first two months of school, the kindergarten teachers would teach the half-day kindergarten program and then transition into a first-grade classroom for the afternoon to help struggling learners—the same students they had instructed the previous year. This extra help would give students the scaffolding needed to be successful learners right from the start! It is an ideal modified looping-type opportunity for both teacher and students.

As the first-graders start to grow more independent, the kindergarten teacher would start to reduce his/her hours in the first-grade classroom, just as the kindergarten students would start to increase their in-school hours. Everyone benefits—kindergartners have time to adjust slowly to a new routine, and first-graders receive the benefit of working once again with a teacher who knows their strengths and weaknesses.

Kindergarten students, upon return from their winter break, might be enrolled in an all-day schedule similar to the one below.

9:00–9:20 a.m.—Students arrive; unpack, snack count, attendance, circle time

9:20–10:00—Language arts: group writing, journal writing, conference reading, read-alouds, silent reading, big books, reading/writing lessons

10:00–10:30—Centers; snack; time to play

10:30–10:45—Read-alouds

10:45–11:15—Math

11:15–11:45—Art projects; music or drama

11:45–12:15 p.m.—Lunch

12:15–12:45—Outside play

12:45–1:00—Read-alouds

1:00–1:30—Rest time

1:30–2:00—Centers; snack and playtime

2:00–2:30—Science/Social studies

2:30–2:50—Writing journals

2:50–3:00—Clean-up; pack up; closing activity

3:05–Dismissal

Q *How can a healthy daycare program prepare students for the future demands of school?*

A A healthy daycare program can

- Build independence and confidence
- Promote social relationships outside of the family structure
- Encourage sharing, turn-taking, and participation
- Assist in smooth separation from family caregivers
- Develop beginning academic skills
- Assist in the development of vocabulary and language

These traits can be developed by including the following characteristics in a healthy daycare program:

- Consistency in staffing and routine
- Establishing and maintaining good relationships/communication between staff and families
- Opportunities for individual, small-group, and large-group interaction
- Consistency in expectations and rules/consequences
- Encouragement of decision-making (when appropriate) by children
- Offering of appropriate choices from which to select
- Modeling of respect and concern

Q *How can low-income communities attract and fund quality before- and after-school and daycare programs?*

A Any school system wanting to begin a before- and after-school program should first conduct a community assessment to determine the need for such a program. This will provide proof of need for grant applications and other funding sources. It is also important there be a high level of collaboration between the local school district and the organizations in the community that serve children in this age group. Collaboration with these organizations may provide not only opportunities for funding, but access to other services they have to offer, such as tutoring, recreational activities, and other programs, with little or no residual cost.

Many states have childcare assistance funds based on the parents' income. This allows children to attend programs that receive funds for the time children are present. For example, some programs use a sliding-scale fee based on parental income to determine tuition. In addition, there are many federal and state sources of grants to provide quality after-school programs. Some of these sources are for start-up funds, while others provide funds for quality expansion and specific programs.

Community volunteers may be an excellent resource for free and affordable programs and other activities for the children, and a wise program director will seek out and enlist community members, especially retired individuals, to provide these services. The AmeriCorp Program provides training for members to work in many different community programs. While there is a cost associated with this program, it is very reasonable, and these AmeriCorp members often have unique abilities they can pass along to students and other volunteers alike.

Funding is always a difficult matter to address, but with the help of a local resource directory, a willing administrator should be able to find other organizations in his/her area that will collaborate to provide before- and after-school care services in the community.

For related topics, see Q&A, p. 16; school update, p. 43.

year. According to these principals, the academic calendar falls victim to demands from athletics, clubs, and other activities. Who is to say that these pastimes are not beneficial to many students? But how much academic time can be stolen from Peter to pay Paul?

Out-of-School Influences

Over the last generation, American life has changed profoundly. Many of our children are in deep trouble.

Family structure has changed dramatically. Half of American children spend some portion of their childhood in a single-parent home, and family time with children has declined 40 percent since World War II.

The workforce is different. Of the 53 million women working in the United States in 1991, 20.8 million had children under the age of 17, including nearly 9 million with children under age six.

Society is more diverse and rapidly becoming more so. By the year 2010, 40 percent of all children in this country will be members of minority groups. The nation's big city schools are already coping with a new generation of immigrant children, largely non-English speaking, rivaling in size the great European immigrations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

STATISTICS

THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND REPORTS THAT IN 1999, 64 PERCENT OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER AGE SIX , 78 PERCENT OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN AGES SIX TO THIRTEEN, AND 60 PERCENT OF MOTHERS WITH INFANTS WERE IN THE LABOR FORCE (CDF 2000, 47).

SUBTRACTIVE EDUCATION

***Q** Describe today's curriculum.*

A Two major trends since the early sixties have greatly altered the curriculum taught in the early elementary grades. First, the curriculum content has expanded to reflect major societal, political, demographic, and global changes. Teachers must now address, among other topics, a dozen wars and conflicts, medical and scientific discoveries, new technologies, space exploration, environmental protection, new laws, global economy, and new countries.

Second, today's curriculum, spurred by the launch of Sputnik, has been subtly but dramatically escalated. Kindergarten has turned into a boot camp for first grade, as content, concepts, and skills once reserved for six- and seven-year-olds have now found their way into the kindergarten curriculum.

Consider that, in many classrooms today,

- multiplication tables and cursive writing, once taught in third grade, have been pushed down into second grade and sometimes into earlier grades;
- long division, once taught to nine-year-olds in fourth grade, is routinely taught to third-graders;
- cursive writing is taught to five-year-olds in order to "get them ready" for third grade;
- abstract concepts, such as the symbols for greater than/less than and the missing addend/subtrahend, meant for older students, are routinely being taught to five-, six-, and seven-year-olds.

Students become stressed, discouraged, and frustrated when forced to learn concepts and skills meant for older, more experienced students. And teachers, pressured by political policy and public scrutiny, find themselves, along with their students, at the center of a potentially no-win situation.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 17, 63.

TUTORING/PULL-OUT PROGRAMS

***Q** Many struggling students are tutored both at and away from school. What are the advantages and disadvantages of tutoring students during the academic day—in class and out of class? After the academic day?*

A Many schools offer tutoring services through their Title I reading and/or math programs, special education services, Reading Recovery services, literacy programs, and even volunteer programs. The goal is the same—help struggling students develop the skills needed to learn and grow as students and as people.

One tutoring option is the "pull-out" model. This model "pulls" one or more students at a time from the classroom for instruction. Specialized programs, such as Reading Recovery, require specially trained teachers to administer lessons (oftentimes one-on-one) outside the classroom setting. A "pull-in" model, on the other hand, brings the trained teacher inside the classroom to work with students.

To make the most of available time and personnel, the "pull-out" model—the more traditional of the two—identifies and groups students struggling with a particular skill. A small group is then taken to another room for instruction. Some students are comfortable with this arrangement, but for others, especially those who work one-on-one with specialists, the "pull-out" can harm their self-esteem and the learning process—"I'm in the low group; now everyone knows I'm dumb." A "pull-out" student may also feel separated from her/his classmates, often wondering what the rest of the class is doing while s/he is out of the room. That feeling of belonging to the larger community is partially lost—"What happened when I was out of the room? What did I miss?"

The instruction provided during this out-of-class time also lacks models—students proficient in one or more skills with which other students might be struggling.

Other drawbacks to the "pull-out" model include the following:

- Some students may not feel they are improving.
- Time spent gathering materials and moving from one space to another is often wasted instruction time.
- Some teachers may speak differently to students in the "low" group—sentences are shorter, words are less complex.
- Some teachers "tell" rather than allow students to explain and discover—the rule is to "catch students up" as quickly as possible. Telling might be faster, but it is not the most powerful teaching strategy. Unfortunately, many students in the "low" ability group remain in this configuration throughout their educational careers.

Fortunately, many schools are discovering the benefits of delivering services within the classroom walls, an environment in which *all* students are identified by specific learning needs. Inside the classroom, teachers can organize flexible skill groupings based on students' similarities and differences. If students of differing skill abilities are grouped together, for instance, those students who are strong in a particular skill automatically serve as models for those who are struggling. With everyone now in the same classroom, teachers can view struggling students within the context of the class—How does s/he fit in? In what areas is the student the weakest? The strongest?

Incorporating struggling students into the larger classroom positively impacts their self-esteem. Now these students can work cooperatively on projects and group activities, knowing that the support and guidance of a combined teaching staff is nearby.

TUTORING/PULL-OUT PROGRAMS

Teachers can still spend one-on-one time with students in the classroom, and, best of all, the classroom teacher is fully involved in the struggling student's program. With two teachers in the room, each student can receive the individual attention s/he needs; in addition, teachers can converse and share the information they are learning about each student. This information will help with their future lesson planning, with parent-teacher conversations, and with how the teacher interacts with the student on a daily basis.

If a student is severely deficient in a particular skill area, his/her teacher and/or parents might decide that a "third-party" tutor (someone other than a parent) is needed to provide help outside school. Parents know that supporting their children with homework/skill instruction is important. Yet constant after-school instruction from the parent figure can sometimes lead to strained relations between the parent-teacher and the child-student, as the child interprets constructive criticism as personal criticism. An outside tutor, on the other hand, is neutral.

In addition, tutoring should be skill-specific. Yet it should also instill positive and productive study habits and strategies (e.g., organization, strategies for all areas of the curriculum, etc.) that students can apply to all areas of school and beyond.

Educators and especially parents need to keep in mind that students *do not* need a full school schedule demanded of them after regular school hours or on the weekends. Children need some free time to process and absorb new information, to explore, to discover, and to dream. A constant influx of hurried, new information and more "time-on-task" behavior, may lead to a decrease in learning, and perhaps even rebellion. Remember, more learning is not always better learning.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 37, 59.

Income inequality is growing. One-fifth of all children, and nearly half of all African-American children, are born into poverty today. The U.S. leads advanced nations in poverty, single-parent families, and mortality rates for those under 25. Poverty is not simply an urban phenomenon. The number of rural children living in poverty far exceeds the number living in cities.

Technology threatens to widen the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The wealthiest 25–30 percent of American families have a computer at home today, which has lead to a new phenomenon, preschoolers who can use computers before they can read a book.

Anxiety about crime-ridden streets is a daily reality in many communities. Suicide and homicide are the leading causes of death for young men. For some students, the streets are a menace. For many, the family—their haven—is itself in trouble. Still others arrive at school hungry, unwashed, and frightened by the plagues of modern life—drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, and AIDS.

According to a 1992 study completed at Stanford University, veteran teachers are well aware that today's students bring many more problems to school than children did a generation ago. Today's students receive less support outside school and increasingly exhibit

STATISTICS

IN THE 31ST PHI DELTA KAPPA POLL, 18 PERCENT OF THOSE POLLED SAID THE NUMBER-ONE PROBLEM IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS IS "LACK OF DISCIPLINE"; 11 PERCENT SAID "FIGHTING/VIOLENCE/GANGS" WAS THE SECOND MOST COMMON PROBLEM.

***Q** I have read that the "American family" is a myth. Many people are talking about how the family has changed so significantly—for the worse—over the years. Does the "new" American family negatively impact children?*

A Critics may argue there has never been a "golden age" of anything—education, healthcare, automobiles, even radio and television—and that the popular media have exaggerated and romanticized certain images to the point of fabrication. The institution of "family" is no different. We're not, nor have we ever been, the idyllic society at large portrayed in *Leave it to Beaver* or *Happy Days*. In fact, we might come closer to the world of Archie Bunker and *All in the Family*, a show that at least attempted to identify some of the issues with which American families and society were, and still are today, struggling—race relations, discrimination, socioeconomic status, stereotypes, views about marriage.

Regardless of past and present stereotypes, statistics and commentary gathered by children's rights groups, such as the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), substantiate the transformation of, and some might argue the disintegration of, the nuclear family—a change by which millions of people are affected each day. And yes, children are the hardest hit.

CDF reports in *Yearbook 2000: The State of America's Children*:[3]

- In 1999, 64 percent of mothers with children under the age of six worked outside the home; 78 percent of mothers with children between the ages of six and thirteen were employed (47).
- In 1999, 30 percent of all working mothers with children under the age of six were single parents (47).
- In March 1999, 547,000 children resided in foster care. The CDF reports this is a 35 percent increase since 1990 (84).
- In 1998, in 41 percent of two-parent households, both parents worked (4).
- In 1998, 5.4 million children were living with relatives, 2.13 million of whom were living in a relative's household with no parent present. The CDF reports this is a 51.5 percent increase since 1990s figures (89).
- Nearly 5 million children go home to an empty house each day after school (47).

In addition, low-income families and families of poverty, especially those headed by single mothers, must contend with the sometimes unrealistic demands of welfare-to-work programs; multiple low-paying jobs; lack of benefits; expensive, inaccessible healthcare; unaffordable housing; crime-ridden neighborhoods; and expensive food and clothing. Compounded by unsafe living conditions, physical and sexual abuse, depression, and disabilities, the statistics point to a vicious circle, one that inevitably places children at the center.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 35, 40, 74.

[3] Children's Defense Fund, ***Yearbook 2000: The State of America's Children*** (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 2000).

destructive behavior, ranging from drug and alcohol abuse to gang membership and precocious sexual activity. According to a recent Harris poll, 51 percent of teachers single out "children who are left on their own after school" as the primary explanation for students' difficulties in class. The same poll reports that 12 percent of elementary school children (30 percent in middle school and nearly 40 percent in high school) care for themselves after the school day ends.

But the school itself is a prisoner of time. Despite the dedication of their staffs, schools are organized as though none of this has happened. It is clear that schools cannot be all things to all people—teachers cannot be parents, police officers, physicians, and addiction or employment counselors. But neither can they ignore the massive problems that exist. It is time to face the obvious. In many communities, when children are not with their families, the next best place for them is the school.

Time as a Problem for Educators

The corollary to Murphy's Law holds in schools just as it does in life—everything takes longer than you expect. School reform is no exception. While restructuring time, schools need time to restructure.

STATISTICS

YEARBOOK 2000 STATES THAT IN AN OCTOBER 1999 POLL, 86 PERCENT OF POLICE CHIEFS SAID THEY FELT THAT CRIME WOULD DECREASE IF THE NUMBER OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS INCREASED (50).

AT-RISK STUDENTS

***Q** Who are today's at-risk students?*

A Today's schools serve a dramatic number of at-risk students—at-risk because of prenatal harm (e.g., maternal alcohol/drug abuse, undernourishment, smoking, and exposure to environmental toxins). The increased number of low-birthweight babies, in addition to those born extremely premature, has contributed greatly to the increased population of students who require special-needs intervention. In addition, schools must deal with increased numbers of students who are homeless, truant, transient, or latchkey.

More than 20 percent of our students now live in poverty, with many more living at the near-poverty level. These students are behind before they even start, and their basic needs continue to go unmet. Three decades of family disintegration has resulted in many more students living in single-parent households, blended families, and dysfunctional families. The changing nature of our families has produced a generation of stressed and anxious students, many of whom are clinically depressed.

One thing is clear: to treat at-risk students fairly and equitably, we must treat them differently by making more learning time available. This can be accomplished by providing before- and after-school programs; offering universal preschool; instituting Saturday classes; extending the school year; changing to a year-round school calendar; offering transition grades (e.g., pre-kindergarten, pre-first grade, etc.); adopting block scheduling; implementing looping and multiage classes; and offering summer school.

When used wisely, additional learning time can be the academic equalizer for at-risk students.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 34, 40, 74.

Q Prisoners of Time *states that time is the biggest missing factor in today's schools. How can we afford to take this time—time to absorb and understand standards, time to overhaul schools—and still keep functioning? The world is moving so quickly, and everyone is expected to keep up, so how are we supposed to slow down in order to accommodate change?*

A Time appears finite, but our experience of it is relative. This is the paradox of time: it can drag when we are waiting in line, and it can speed by when we are having fun. The more activity we cram into a school day, the more frantic it can feel. We say, "There isn't enough time" when, in fact, the truth may be that there is too much going on in the time allotted.

How we "find" more time for learning and teaching in the school day should be a significant part of the agenda for educational reform at the classroom, school, and political levels. This requires a careful examination of school practice and changes in the ways we do business on an hourly, daily, and yearly basis.

At the classroom level:

- Reduce the number of transitions in your day by one. Feel the difference.
- Build a half-hour of real quiet time into your day after lunch. Require children to work alone and silently. Experience a tremendous difference in the productivity of students for the rest of the afternoon.
- Finish your classroom day a full five minutes before the buses are called. Be done with clean-up. Have all papers passed out. Have children gather their belongings. THEN gather your students on the rug for five minutes of reflection. "How did the day go?" "What can we do differently tomorrow?" "What is something you are proud of today?" Watch how the children act as they go off to the bus. See how you feel as you go off to your faculty meeting.

At the school level:

- Change the daily schedule to allow for a half-hour morning meeting in every classroom at the beginning of the day without interruptions or children rushing off to specialists.
- Change the daily schedule so the middle of the day puts recess before lunch, which is then followed by quiet time. Watch your discipline referrals go down and visits to the nurse's office diminish.
- Provide coverage for any teacher or staff member from another school who is willing to take the time to visit your school for the day. Then give that person's positive observation report at your next faculty meeting. Watch morale improve.
- Take ten minutes at the beginning of every faculty meeting for teachers to meet in small "home groups" to discuss a common topic before the business of the faculty meeting begins. Listen to the tenor of these meetings change.

At the political level:

- Lengthen the academic year and keep schools open longer each day.
- Reduce class size to under 20 in the primary grades.
- Change the architectural design of new schools to create small schools within large schools.
- Reduce time spent on testing and add time for instruction.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 36, 69.

Perversely, according to a recent RAND study, the reallocation of time collides directly with forces of the status quo—entrenched school practices; rules and regulations; traditions of school decision-making; and collective bargaining. The greatest resistance of all is found in the convictions that the only valid use of teachers' time is "in front of the class"; there is a widespread assumption that reading, planning, collaboration with other teachers, and professional development are somehow all a waste of time.

In light of this, the following findings are particularly troubling:

- According to a RAND study, new teaching strategies can require as much as 50 hours of instruction, practice, and coaching before teachers become comfortable with them.
- A study of successful urban schools indicates they need up to 50 days of external technical assistance for coaching and strengthening staff skills through professional development.
- Resolution of the time issue "remains one of the most critical problems confronting educators today," according to the National Education Association. "For school employees involved in reform, time has become an implacable barrier."

As a representative of the American Federation of Teachers said at a recent Teachers Forum on Goals 2000 sponsored by the U.S. depart-

LEARNING RATE

***Q** As a teacher who, like all teachers, teaches to multiple learning levels in his/her room, how am I supposed to juggle teaching curriculum to these different levels when students are constantly being pulled out of the room for specialists and extra help?*

A You need to talk to your principal about reducing the number of "pull out" children in your classroom. A better approach is inviting resource room, basic skills, and Title I teachers into the classroom for "in-class support." In-class teachers and support-service specialists can plan and teach together. Each child benefits.

To respond to the individual needs of students in the same classroom who are at different learning levels, instruction needs to be varied and accommodations must be made for special-needs/gray-area students. These accommodations might include differentiating instruction by including more manipulative and visual materials in your teaching. For example, instead of worksheets, allow young children to practice writing letters in sand or using shaving cream in a designated work area. In addition, use board games to teach skills; provide rebus pictures for directions; and allow children to draw pictures and dictate their understanding of a concept. You might also think about including singing and clapping in learning activities and making literature and directions available on tape.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 32, 59.

Q *What is distance learning? Is this something my students can have access to?*

A Whenever teacher(s) and learner(s) are engaged in a process of teaching and learning, yet are separated by at least one wall, they are engaged in distance learning. Any time the classic mold of teacher and students in the same room is broken, distance learning is happening. With the advent of access to the Internet and other high-speed networks capable of moving video and audio, distance learning becomes a true possibility for all learners and all teachers. No longer must the individual teacher be bound to a specific group of students, nor the individual student to a limited number of teachers. Rather, students can be inspired by teachers from the other side of town, the state, or the world, and teachers can impact the lives of students and colleagues far beyond the community in which they go to work each day.

What must be remembered, however, is that people, not machinery, inspire young learners. The mere fact that distance learning is possible does not predestine it for success. A teacher's physical presence has a powerful effect on all learners, with passion for one's topic of instruction often proving far more infectious than any rote text or video.

With this in mind, it is important to note that elementary students should not be placed in impersonal distance-learning environments. Rather, they need to see such virtual connections as natural extensions of what they are doing in the very real world of their classroom—as "places" they visit with their classmates, as resources their teacher encourages them to pose questions to. As children grow and develop a healthy foundation of real-world experiences, including learning, work, and play experiences, they will be prepared to further extend their engagement in distance-learning opportunities.

Q *Is all this technology really good for students?*

Today's children are the subjects of a vast and optimistic experiment. It is well financed and enthusiastically supported by major corporations, the public at large, and government officials around the world. If it is successful, our youngsters' minds and lives will be enriched, society will benefit, and education will be permanently changed for the better. But there is no proof—or even convincing evidence—that it will work.

The experiment, of course, involves getting kids "on computers" at school and at home in hopes that technology will improve the quality of learning and prepare our youngsters for the future. But will it? Are the new technologies a magic bullet aimed straight at success and power? Or are we simply grasping at a techno-centric "quick fix" for a multitude of problems we have failed to address?[4]

A The brief answer to this question is seemingly contradictory: by itself, no. Healthy children must develop kinesthetic, experiential, and social foundations before technological capabilities. On the other hand, when well-trained and well-supported educators fully integrate computer technology into a program that places children's emotional and social foundations before access to oceans of graphical content, great things can happen.

Before any jet starts its roll toward takeoff, the cabin crew calmly explains that "in the unlikely event of cabin pressure falling and oxygen masks being needed, adults should place masks on themselves before attempting to place masks on children or others seated around them who may need help." Airlines say this because

the adults must be prepared to provide assistance and support to those less experienced than themselves in the stressful time that will surely follow the declaration of such an emergency.

We must see the arrival of masses of classroom technology in "level flight" schools and classrooms as similar to the loss of cabin pressure. All of a sudden the rules of this place have changed, and the environment for which most teachers were prepared has been irrevocably changed. Rather than encouraging the teachers to take care of themselves first, the reverse has been true.

At the expense of teachers and at the expense of healthy learning, we have been placing technology into the hands of children at a breakneck pace. As a nation we have become bedazzled by technology's potential and have been encouraged to see low student-to-computer ratios and high-speed Internet access as proof positive of an effective school. In the same way, we mistakenly consider the buying of high-end computers as a sign of a caring family. In fact, there will never be a replacement for quality, engaged time spent with caring parents and educators.

Technology is not a silver bullet for all the wrongs of American schools, but it can provide wings with which teachers and students together can fly.

[4] Healy, Jane M., Ph.D. *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds: for Better and Worse.* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1998), pp. 17-18.

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ment of Education, "We've got to turn around the notion that we have to do everything without being given the time to do it."

Teachers, principals, and administrators need *time* for reform. They need *time* to come up to speed as academic standards are overhauled, *time* to come to grips with new assessment systems, and *time* to make productive and effective use of greater professional autonomy, one hallmark of reform in the 1990s. Adding school reform to the list of things schools must accomplish, without recognizing that time in the current calendar is a limited resource, trivializes the effort. It sends a powerful message to teachers: don't take this reform business too seriously. Squeeze it in on your own time.

Emerging Content and Achievement Standards

As 1994 dawned, calls for much more demanding subject matter standards began to bear fruit. Intended for all students, new content frameworks will extend across the school curriculum—English, science, history, geography, civics, the arts, foreign languages, and mathematics, among others. Their purpose is to bring all American youngsters up to world-class performance standards.

The American people and their educators need to be very clear about the standards movement. It is not time-free. At least three factors demand more time and better use of it.

STATISTICS

ERIC C. NEWBURGER WRITES IN AN OCTOBER 1997 PUBLICATION, "COMPUTER USE IN THE UNITED STATES" (WWW.CENSUS.GOV.), 37.4 MILLION AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS (36.6 PERCENT) OWN COMPUTERS. COMPUTERS ARE MOST LIKELY (75.9 PERCENT) IN HOUSEHOLDS IN WHICH THE ANNUAL INCOME IS $75,000 OR HIGHER. IN CONTRAST, THE LIKELIHOOD OF COMPUTERS IN HOUSEHOLDS IN WHICH THE ANNUAL INCOME IS $25,000 OR LOWER IS ONLY 15.6 PERCENT.

TO LOCATE THESE STATISTICS ON THE CENSUS WEBSITE, CLICK ON THE SEARCH BUTTON; SEARCH WORD: COMPUTERS; AND SCROLL DOWN TO THE ABOVE ARTICLE.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Q What kind of environment are children in the U.S. growing up in today? Are schools affected?

A Although each child's life experiences are personal and unique to that child, every child shares a larger society outside her/his home. For some, the physical, emotional, and social boundaries of the personal society extend into a world full of promise and possibility, a world molded by strong family and community bonds and positive intellectual and emotional relationships, fostered over generations. For others, those same boundaries extend no further than the decrepit, overcrowded, under-funded school down the street and the ever-playing television down the hall. Unfortunately, too many children today experience the latter of these worlds, a toxic society in which emotional vacancy, perpetuated by limited economic resources for some and social vagrancy for others, leads to desperate lives.

According to the Children's Defense Fund[5], today's youth are growing up in a larger society in which

- a large majority of communities are disconnected and impersonal;
- 2.13 million children are living in a relative's home, with no parent present (84);
- 13.5 million—one in five—children are poor (xi);
- 7.5 percent of babies born of all races are low birthweight (36);
- the gap between the rich and the poor is the highest ever in 52 years—the wealthiest 5 percent of America's families make almost 20 times the income of one-fifth of the poorest U.S. families (3);
- 11.9 million children have no health insurance (xviii);
- nearly 5 million children return to empty homes each day after school (47);
- the average boy or girl experiences 38 hours (over five hours a day) of media—television, movies, the Internet, advertisements—outside of school each week. Popular media portrays and glorifies violence, sex, and other adult themes (118);
- children are a prolific market for advertisers;
- a firearm kills a child every two hours (xvii);
- the most dangerous and violent hours for children occur just after school ends for the day;
- the population of juvenile offenders from minority groups is disproportionate to the overall population of their community (111);
- states hold in excess of 2.5 billion dollars in unspent temporary assistance for needy families (xxv);
- and 3.4 million children and adolescents are severely depressed.[6]

Our most recent presidential primary season brought education into the national spotlight with two buzz words —*high standards* and *accountability*. While few would debate the importance of setting challenging standards for our students and for holding teachers accountable for their work, schools and educators are being asked to stretch themselves and their facilities beyond the very limits of their emotional and physical capacities.

Consider this: most children start kindergarten at age five. Universal preschool, which would enroll children younger than five, would cost hundreds of billions of dollars—an exorbitant price tag—according to Rutgers economics professor Steven Barnett[7]. How can we justify placing children into stable, healthy environments at a young age if the cost is so great? How can six hours of school contend with the other eighteen hours children spend exposed to outside influences? How can teachers in the first 180 days—1,080 school hours—of a child's first year of school contend with the first five and most impressionable years—51,840

non-school hours—of a child's life? In short, they can't. Writes journalist James Traub, "[The] educational inequality [found in schools] is rooted in economic problems and social pathologies too deep to be overcome by school alone" (54).

Traub's words echo those of sociologist and civil rights activist James Coleman, who nearly forty years earlier stated, "The inequalities imposed on children by their home, neighborhood and peer environment are carried along to become the inequalities with which they confront adult life at the end of school" (81).

Across the U.S., thousands of educators, parents, and child advocates work each day to create positive, safe, and stable school environments, ones in which caring adults are a constant. Head Start programs, Roots and Wings, Impact, before- and after-school programs, summer schools, year-round schools, and other state and nationally sponsored initiatives endeavor to give children—from the youngest age possible—that safe and stable environment so many desperately need in order to do more in life than merely survive.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 34, 35, 74.

[5] Children's Defense Fund, *Yearbook 2000*

[6] David G. Fassler , M.D., and Lynne S. Dumas, *"Help Me, I'm Sad"* (New York: Viking, 1997).

[7] James Traub, "What No School Can Do," *The New York Times Magazine* (Jan. 16, 2000): 81.

First, subjects traditionally squeezed out of the curriculum now seek their place in the sun. Additional hours and days will be required if new standards in the arts, geography, and foreign languages are to be *even partially attained*.

Second, most students will find the traditional core curriculum significantly more demanding. Materials and concepts formerly reserved for the few must now be provided to the many. More student learning time and a more flexible schedule for seminars, laboratories, team teaching, team learning, and homework will be essential.

Finally, one point cannot be restated too forcefully: professional development needs will be broad and massive. Indispensable to educated students are learned teachers in the classroom. An enormous change is at hand for the nation's 2.75 million teachers. To keep pace with changing content standards, teachers will need ongoing coursework in their disciplines *while they continue to teach their subjects*. The Commission's hearing confirmed the time demands of the standards movement:

- **Arts.** "I am here to pound the table for 15 percent of school time devoted to arts instruction," declared Paul Lehman of the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations.
- **English.** "These standards will require a huge amount of time, for both students and teachers," Miles Myers of the National Council of Teachers of English told the Commission.
- **Geography.** "Implementing our standards will require more time. Geography is hardly taught at all in American schools today," was the conclusion of Anthony De Souza of the National Geographic

STATISTICS

ACCORDING TO THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND, IN 1998, "ONLY 42 PERCENT OF CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF THREE AND FIVE, BUT NOT YET IN KINDERGARTEN, WHOSE FAMILIES EARNED LESS THAN $15,000 ANNUALLY WERE ENROLLED IN PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS" (CDF 2000, 47). YET STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT "EARLY EDUCATION BENEFITS CHILDREN AT RISK OF SCHOOL FAILURE, LEADING TO HIGHER MATH AND READING SCORES, STRONGER LEARNING SKILLS, INCREASED CREATIVITY, BETTER SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, IMPROVED HEALTH, AND GREATER INVOLVEMENT BY PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION" (46).

Society.

- **Mathematics.** "The standards I am describing are not the standards I received as a student or that I taught as a teacher," said James Gates of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- **Science.** "There is a consensus view that new standards will require more time," said David Florio of the National Academy of Sciences.

STATISTICS

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (WWW.NIOST.ORG) REPORTS THAT 3.5 MILLION CHILDREN BETWEEN AGES 5 AND 12 AND 4 MILLION CHILDREN BETWEEN 13 AND 14 ARE LATCHKEY CHILDREN (MILLER 1999).

STRIKING THE SHACKLES OF TIME

Given the many demands made of schools today, the wonder is not that they do so poorly, but that they accomplish so much. Our society has stuffed additional burdens into the time envelope of 180 six-hour days without regard to the consequences for learning. We agree with the Maine mathematics teacher who said, "The problem with our schools is not that they are *not* what they used to be, but that they *are* what they used to be." In terms of time, our schools are unchanged despite a transformation in the world around them.

Each of the five issues—the design flaw, lack of academic time, out-of-school influences, time for educators, and new content and achievement standards—revolves around minutes, hours, and days. If the U.S. is to grasp the larger education ambitions for which it is reaching, we must strike the shackles of time from our schools.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

***Q** I like the idea of being flexible with our school schedule, but we have to schedule around art, music, and physical education schedules. How have other schools worked through this issue?*

A This is a tough problem to solve because schools often have only one art, music, and physical education teacher, and classes have to be scheduled into those three teachers' daily schedules. Scheduling can be even tougher when these teachers divide their time among different schools or work only part-time.

While there are no easy answers to the scheduling dilemma, some schools have developed creative solutions that work for their specific situations. One school, for example, had two art teachers job-share the position so art could be taught in two classrooms at once. Another school scheduled art, music, and physical education all in one morning during the week, which gave the teachers uninterrupted instructional time during the other days of the week. Yet another school scheduled art, music, and physical education in ways that allowed teachers to work together around a common planning time during the school week.

Investigate the solutions others have employed in their school settings at your grade level to see what part(s) of their solutions might work in your own setting. Take these ideas and share them with your colleagues and the other people responsible for making decisions about the scheduling of the school day.

UPDATE: *"The Center" of a Community*

"THE CENTER" OF LAKE COUNTY SCHOOLS, LEADVILLE, COLORADO

THE CENTER OF LAKE COUNTY SCHOOLS (LCS) is more than just one of the most successful multipurpose early childhood centers in the U.S., it is also the heart of a thriving community-school partnership in Leadville, Colorado—a partnership born out of necessity in 1987 through the great efforts of then–LCS Superintendent James McCabe.

In the mid-eighties, the closing of the molybdenum mine, Lake County's largest economic source, forced thousands of people out of work. Now having to find alternative, mostly low-paying jobs at ski areas and resort restaurants outside Leadville (often a dangerous drive over icy mountain passes), families found themselves in the heart of an economic and social crisis. Schools began to close, and suicide, depression, and domestic abuse rates increased.

The mine was the figurative dead horse, and McCabe knew there was nothing he could do to resurrect the plant and people's former livelihoods. Instead, he produced a commonsense, straightforward plan that brought child care and preschool together into *The Center*.

Today, under the supervision of former LCS Superintendent Peg Portscheller and *Center* Principal and Director Kathleen Carothers, Leadville boasts an organization so successful it has been named one of the top eleven early childhood programs in the country by the Yale University Bush Center for Childhood Development and Social Policy, and one of the top ten preschools in the country by *Working Mother Magazine* (see the September 1999 issue).

Maintaining this status, of course, is no easy task. With 68 percent of Lake County's 8,000 residents (up from 5,000 when the 1994 report was written) commuting to work, and with a school population (infants through twelfth grade) of 1,400 (up from 1,100 in 1994), *The Center's* one-million-dollar operating budget relies not on local property taxes, but on a combination of funds from national programs, such as Head Start; general state education funds for school upkeep and special education; private foundation monies; and program tuition, based on a sliding income scale. "Providing fiscal stability and a comprehensive, quality, continually updated program remains *The Center*'s biggest agenda item and its greatest challenge," states Portscheller.

Carothers agrees that "maintaining the quality of the program, while also remaining flexible and responsive to community needs" (for example, staying open later during the winter months so parents employed at local ski areas can work until closing time), is vital to *The Center*'s survival—a survival on which an entire community depends.

Due to lack of demand, *The Center* no longer provides child care on weekends, but each weekday it opens its doors for 350 children (with no more than 280 children in the building at a time), including fully integrated special education students, between 5:30 and 6:00 a.m. *The Cen-*

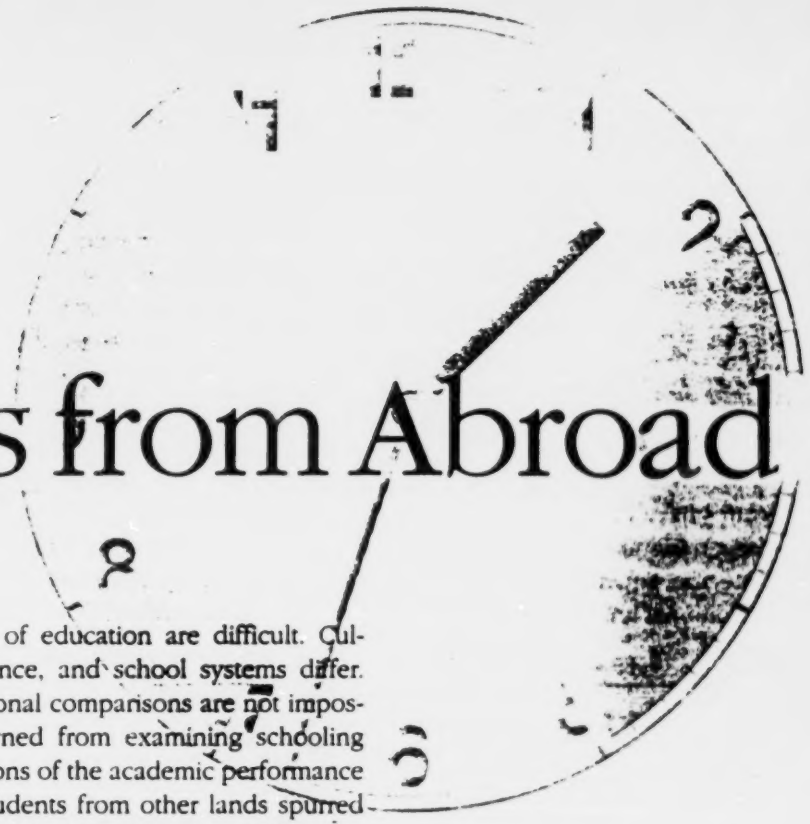
ter hosts developmentally appropriate, child-centered, infant, preschool, kindergarten, and before- and after-school programs, designed around play, rest, and work times that reinforce each component's curriculum. And *The Center*'s small student-to-teacher ratio places an emphasis on the importance of individual student attention.

The Center remains open during the summer months for community camps and field trips. And, as is true during the academic year, during the summer many students receive free breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack through a federally funded food-service program.

The Center also remains open for an extensive community-support program known as Full Circle, which invites child-family support initiatives and other organizations to hold classes in everything from dance, to gymnastics, to parenting, to literature programs for immigrant residents. And in order to keep the mission of such programs in line with community needs and desires, Carothers and others have become members of the Inner-Agency Round Table, a group of local leaders that collaborates on various community-based projects. In addition, *The Center* provides medical support for physicals and dental screening, which is made available through social services. States Portscheller, "*The Center* is a one-stop shopping center for community health services, social services, and education programs."

Educators such as Portscheller, Carothers, and their dedicated, hard-working, and enthusiastic staff have grown James McCabe's initiative into a nationally recognized, comprehensive community-based program—one in which education, family, and economic necessity have combined to form a symbiotic union based on promoting the success of each of its citizens.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on *The Center*, write or call: Kathleen Carothers, Principal and Director, The Center, 315 W. 6th St., Leadville, CO 80461; Ph: (719) 486-6921.



Lessons from Abroad

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS of education are difficult. Cultural factors influence performance, and school systems differ. Despite such problems, international comparisons are not impossible, and a great deal can be learned from examining schooling abroad. In fact, unflattering comparisons of the academic performance of American students with that of students from other lands spurred attempts at school improvement in the U.S. throughout the 1980s.

From its review of other nations, the Commission draws several conclusions:

- Students in post-industrial democracies receive twice as much instruction in core academic areas during high school.
- Schools abroad protect academic time by distinguishing between the "academic day" and the "school day."
- Many of our economic competitors supplement formal education with significant out-of-school learning time.
- School performance abroad has consequences and is closely related to opportunities for employment and further education.
- Teachers in other countries enjoy freedom and respect as professionals.

In short, education abroad is built around high expectations. Schools hold themselves and the adults and students in them to high standards; in consequence, they enjoy high levels of support from parents and the community. As the Commission observed first-hand, schools overseas reflect a cultural passion for learning.

Twice As Much Core Instruction

Recent comparisons of the number of annual "instructional hours" in different countries indicate that Americans rank in the top half of the

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***Q** Would longer school days benefit students?*

A If used appropriately, longer school days would benefit students. If the instructional day is a short one (some legislatures have indicated four hours as a minimum day), and if a specific, targeted use of the additional time is formulated, then additional instructional time could be very beneficial to students, whether in elementary, middle, or high school.

However, if the additional time is a mere response to political pressure to do something, anything, to improve test scores, then the extra time is superfluous and unlikely to achieve hoped-for outcomes.

The usual instructional day in the U.S. can range from four to seven hours of instructional time, depending on the state, the community, the grade level of the student, and other similar factors.

Some authorities speak of the instructional day as in-school, in-seat time only. Others include out-of-school library, project, and independent study time as well.

For related topics, see Q&A, p. 47; school updates, pp. 23, 43, 75, 81.

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nine countries examined. By the standard of time as an instructional resource, American education measures up well.

This standard, however, provides false comfort. As the Commission saw in Germany and Japan, learning is serious business abroad. "Academic time" is rarely touched. Distinctions are made between the academic day (which Germans call the half day) and the school day (in Germany, the full day).

When asked about the school day, officials produce documents outlining a time frame similar to that in the typical American school. They feel no need to explain extracurricular activities within the school day, because these activities are not allowed to interfere with academic time. Academic time, by and large, is devoted to core academic study—native language and literature, mathematics, science, history, civics, geography, the arts, and second and third languages.

The use of "instructional" time in the U.S. is markedly different. The Commission analyzed time requirements for core academic subjects in 41 states and the District of Columbia.[8] The results are startling: on average, students can receive a high school diploma—often sufficient in itself for university entrance—if they devote only 41 percent of their school time to core academic work.

It is conceivable that American students devote more time to demanding coursework than states require. That hope, however, is misplaced: 1993 data from the U.S. Department of Education indicate that the course of study most students follow is very close to what states require.

Students abroad are required to work on demanding subject matter at least twice as long. In practical terms, this means that most foreign

[8] Nine states did not provide information.

students are studying language, literature, science, and two or more languages while many of our young people spend their time in study halls, pep rallies, driver education, and assemblies.

Even the most committed advocate of the status quo will concede that American students cannot learn as much as their foreign peers in half the time. By this standard, our education system still has a long way to go.

One need look no further than this to understand why European and Asian visitors to the United States commonly understand English and their children outperform American students on tests of student achievement. Americans abroad, by contrast, assume they will deal with people who speak English. Our high school students have trouble reading, writing, and solving simple mathematics problems.

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Q How would before- and after-school programs strengthen a school's educational agenda?

A Before- and after-school programs are the gateway to comprehensive time reform. Time reform will help improve attitudes toward schools and methods of teaching. When positive changes occur, the investment made in public schools will produce educational institutions that match learning to the learner and fit the needs of the twenty-first-century home, workplace, and all other human institutions.

More specifically, extended school programs will:

- keep school doors open from early morning until late afternoon. In addition, such programs can accommodate parents who work nights, weekends, and during school breaks and vacation periods. The public will see the efficient utilization of investments, and support for education will be enhanced;
- produce a new environment for learning: teachers can comfortably try new instructional methods (e.g., research-based approaches); technology can be more widely utilized; the curriculum can be intensified and broadened; and students can be freed from stress to experience the joy of learning;
- provide a safer environment and expand opportunities for students' social, mental, and physical growth;
- allow for "flextime" schedules, which produce greater efficiency in the use of human resources;
- allow for more efficient utilization of investments in capital outlay, such as buildings, technology, and other equipment;
- encourage parents to reallocate money otherwise spent on after-school care to their child's school program. Funds that would typically be used for out-of-school child care, including money from the Department of Health and Human Services, could now be invested in extended-school programs;
- open spaces in daycare programs to pre-kindergarten children.

Many before- and after-school models today are primarily based on the need for child care for students. While supplying an important service, extended time could more productively be used for enrichment, remediation, and a variety of youth activities. It is exciting to note that schools around the country are beginning to use these programs for just these purposes.

For related topics, see Q&A, p. 36; school updates, pp. 23, 43, 53, 75, 81.

TOO MUCH TELEVISION

Q Television cannot replace the importance of doing homework and interacting with family members. What can I do to encourage parents to turn off the television?

A Television can be a wonderful source of information and can allow children to see things they otherwise would never experience. Who among us will ever visit the site of the Titanic wreck or walk on the moon? Television becomes a problem for children when it is used indiscriminately and becomes the sole source of information and entertainment. Some experts estimate that children spend as much time watching television each week as they do in school! And the problem isn't only with the content children might be exposed to on TV; the problem is also the activities they are NOT participating in when they are watching television. Children aren't getting adequate exercise, interacting with family members and friends, or participating in hobbies.

To help parents look at the habit of viewing television differently, enter into dialog with them about television viewing. Use the existing channels of communication, such as newsletters, parent-teacher organizations, and parent awareness nights, to provide parents with information and strategies on how to make the best use of television.

But the emphasis on core academic instruction abroad does not mean that other activities are ignored. Up to 50 percent of German students, even in farming areas, remain at school after the academic day to participate in clubs, sports, and additional classes of one kind or another. In Japan, students clean their school when the academic day ends and then enter activity periods.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL LEARNING

The formidable learning advantage Japanese and German schools provide to their students is complemented by equally impressive out-of-school learning. Large numbers of Japanese students (two-thirds of all students in Tokyo; nationally, about 15 percent of all students in grade four, rising to nearly 50 percent by grade nine) attend *jukus*—private, tutorial services that enrich instruction, provide remedial help, and prepare students for university examinations.

A Japanese research institute official told the Commission that elementary school teachers teach to the "middle of the class." Gifted students who might get bored and students who need extra assistance are expected to turn to the jukus for help.

Jukus are a big business in Japan. Spending on the estimated 35,000 jukus reaches about 800 billion yen annually (over $7 billion), costing the average family, according to Japanese officials, about $2,500 per year, per child.

In Japan, schools and the larger society generally ignore "ability" or "aptitude" as factors in school success. The Japanese are convinced

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that hard work can help every student meet high standards. Diligence, application, and enterprise are the keys—if a student is not "getting it," more time, usually self-directed time, is the answer.

Jukus do not exist in Germany. But if German students are similar to their peers throughout Europe, 50 percent of them spend two or more hours on daily homework, and only 7 or 8 percent watch television for five or more hours a day. By comparison, in the United States, only 29 percent of students report doing as much homework and three times as many watch television daily for five or more hours.

In sum, compared to American students, German and Japanese youths are exposed in high school to much more demanding academic subjects, for many more hours. They spend more serious time learning outside the school. And they fritter away less time in front of the television.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Q It's difficult for me to just pick up and leave my classroom for one or more days for staff development training. How can I receive training without disrupting classroom instruction?

A Creating environments where every teacher is a learner and every learner a teacher requires an ongoing commitment of time and staff development training. We all need validation, a sense of renewal, and opportunities to network, as well as new skills, fresh classroom ideas, and successful instructional strategies. For most teachers, the challenge is finding time for staff development. Setting aside training time need not always mean adding time to an already full day. Team teaching approaches not only have instructional and classroom management advantages; they also allow for a team member to go away from the classroom with minimal disruption to the students' academic day. Another solution lies in planning for long-term substitute teachers as an integral part of the instructional team. Some school districts budget for a fully trained cadre of substitutes, people who know the students, curriculum, classroom routines, and daily schedules. When a classroom teacher is absent or attending a seminar, a well-trained and known substitute steps in and continues the regular classroom schedule. A substitute who knows the classroom program protects the education continuity for students and frees the classroom teacher from needing to create "separate" plans and activities to fill in the day in his or her absence.

Still other schools are adopting year-round calendars, which build in time periods that are specifically set aside for staff development. Since there are so many intangible distractions that interfere with a teacher's ability to focus, assigning specific blocks of time for staff development in the calendar identifies training as a priority—a crucial component in the education year.

In today's high-tech world, teachers can also take advantage of audiotape and videotape series, distance learning, and online networking. Where staff development is concerned, the question is not *if* there is time, but how one effectively *builds in* essential time.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 38, 57; school update, p. 23.

CLASS SIZE

Q What are the benefits of smaller class size? What might impede schools from lowering classroom populations?

A The benefits of smaller classes are numerous. Compared to large classes:[9]

- small classes ameliorate the effects of large schools
- fewer students are held back a grade
- small classes benefit all students, and minority students benefit the most
- students receive more individual attention
- smaller classes are friendlier and more intimate
- there are fewer discipline problems
- students are more likely to participate in activities
- fewer students need remediation and/or special education
- there are fewer retentions
- there is improved behavior
- there is increased achievement

Unfortunately, not all schools are able to properly accommodate new teachers with adequate classroom space, resources, and personal support. With the passing of the 1999 Class-Size Reduction Program, federal funds are available to hire additional teachers in the primary grades at qualifying school districts.

However, even with the newly available funding, hiring additional teachers isn't as easy as one might think. Some schools are having difficulty attracting qualified teaching candidates. This is especially true for inner city schools, rural schools, and in certain subject areas. Other schools do not even have the physical space to house new classrooms, thereby forcing some educators into crowded classrooms with a second teacher.

When qualified candidates are found and hired, these new teachers, in order to effectively teach, need additional staff development to orient themselves to a new district or to learn the teaching profession. Districts must therefore expend additional resources to provide new teachers with appropriate induction programs._

Reducing class size and increasing teacher support are necessary steps to a successful school experience for students and educators alike.

[9] From: Center of Excellence for Research in Basic Skills, Project Star, Tennessee State University, 330 Tenth Avenue North, Suite J, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 963-7231.

PERFORMANCE CARRIES CONSEQUENCES

Another distinction that can be drawn between American education and schooling abroad is in consequences of school performance. In Germany and Japan, learning matters. Performance, not seat time, is what counts. Students understand that what they learn in school will make a real difference to their chances in life. In the U.S., paper credentials count. Apart from the small percentage of students interested in highly selective colleges and universities, most students understand that possession of even a mediocre high school diploma is enough to get them into some kind of college or job.

Students in German vocational schools know that what they learn in class is closely related to what they will do on the job, because their apprenticeship experience (an alternative routine of learning in class and learning on the job) demonstrates the relationship every day. Ger-

man students interested in pursuing a university career also understand that they will have to pass the *Abiture*, a demanding examination covering secondary-school preparation.

Examination pressure is even more severe in Japan. Since attendance in upper secondary school (grades 10–12) is not compulsory in Japan, young people take examinations to enter public high school. Although 90 percent of Japanese young people complete high school, the particular high school a student attends is critical to the student's chances for university admission. Moreover, Japanese students also must sit for intense, pressure-filled, competitive examinations for admission to the best universities.

Professional Practice

Teachers are held to much higher standards both in Germany and Japan than in the U.S. In Germany, teachers are expected to be more

TIMSS

Q Wha tis TIMSS? What does it TIMSS mean to U.S. schools?

A "World Education League: Who's Top?" appeared in the March 29, 1997, *Economist* magazine. This three-page article provided an overview of and insight into the performance of the 41 countries that participated in the TIMSS (Third International Maths and Science Study). Among 13-year-olds, the United States ranked 28th in Maths and 17th in Science, far behind Singapore, the Czech Republic, Japan, and South Korea, countries that topped both lists (21).

While clear-cut explanations for each country's performance are difficult to pinpoint, the article does state that results have less to do with money, class size, and the amount of time spent studying a particular subject than people once thought (23); rather, *how* core curriculum is taught (and *what* is taught) *is*, not so surprisingly, critical.

One must take into account complex factors that may affect results in those countries tested, including, but not limited to or solely based on, the status granted to education and the teaching profession; time allocated for teacher preparation/professional growth; concentration of study and instructional methods dedicated to core academic subjects; and teaching as a collaborative effort among educators who protect and grow the profession through, among other practices, teacher-to-teacher mentorships.

The percentage of working parents of school-age children in the U.S., the percentage of at-risk students, and the workload (curricular and non-curricular) teachers are expected to carry within the timeframe in which they are expected to work fundamentally contribute to the need to extend the school day or year (through extra learning time, before- and after-school programs, etc.). And while the U.S. is not entirely unique in the problems it faces (certainly countries that experience similar issues, but that did better on the TIMSS than the U.S., may not necessarily be the exception), there is inarguably a growing need—for the overall health and success of our children in our rapidly changing, technologically expanding world—to redefine how we view education and child care, and how we use time.

For related topic, see Q&A, p. 20.

STATISTICS

THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION 1998 (WWW.NCES.ED.GOV) FOUND THAT IN 1995, EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES REPORTED SPENDING THREE OR MORE HOURS A DAY STUDYING, WHICH WAS SOMEWHAT MORE THAN THE TIME SPENT BY THEIR PEERS IN FRANCE AND JAPAN.

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (WWW.NIOST.ORG), CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF TWO AND SEVENTEEN SPEND AN AVERAGE OF 4.8 HOURS WATCHING TELEVISION AND MOVIES, USING THE COMPUTER, AND PLAYING VIDEO GAMES A DAY (33.6 HOURS/WEEK) (STRANGER AND GRINDINA 1999).

knowledgeable in their subjects than are teachers in the U.S. Teacher preparation, consequently, takes up to six years (compared to four in the U.S.). In Japan, aspiring teachers are required to pass a rigorous examination prior to certification. The organization of school time in both Germany and Japan encourages continued development of teachers, who are given the time they need to grow and cooperate as professionals.

Japanese teachers generally deal with more students in each classroom, but teach fewer classes; the typical class has between 35 and 40 students, compared to an average of 23 in the U.S. However, Japanese teachers are typically in "front of the class" for only four hours a day. Time spent outside the classroom is not considered wasted, but an essential aspect of professional work. The same phenomenon can be seen in Germany—teachers are in front of a class for 21 to 24 hours a week, but their work week is 38 hours long. Non-classroom time is spent on preparation, grading, in-service education, and consulting with colleagues.

In both countries, the Commission sensed considerably greater encouragement of teacher professionalism than is apparent in the U.S. In Germany, for example, teachers select the texts they will use to meet *Lander* (state) standards; in 15 of the 16 states, teachers design and administer their own tests for the *Abiture*; and teachers validate colleagues' testing by sharing examinations with each other and discussing test questions.

NOT JUST A MATTER OF TIME

It is clear from these observations that the issue of improving student performance is not simply a matter of time. Time is clearly critical. In the context of a global market for educated people, the fact that youth abroad receive the equivalent of several additional years of schooling cannot be ignored. But other factors are equally important. Elsewhere, core academic instruction is emphasized. Academic time is protected. Expectations for out-of-school learning are high. Teachers are held to high standards and treated as professionals.

All of these are critical factors in the success of schooling abroad. And all of them are feasible, because foreign schools understand that effective learning depends on freeing schools, teachers, and students from the bonds of time.

UPDATE: *"Time Is a Constraint Only if You Make It One"*

JAMES A. FOSHAY LEARNING CENTER, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA[10]

ELEVEN YEARS AGO, incoming principal Howard Lappin faced a daunting task: improving learning at a school where the daily absence rate averaged 20 percent, school suspensions totaled 200–300 per year, school facilities were deteriorating, student and faculty safety was in jeopardy, and test scores were among the lowest in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Foshay Middle School was in such dire straits that California labeled it a "Program Improvement School," earmarking it for eventual state takeover if it failed to improve its record.[11]

Known today as the James A. Foshay Learning Center, this once jeopardized institution is now a K-12 national school-reform standout that involves students, parents, educators, and other residents of the South Central Los Angeles community in creating an outstanding learning environment.

Foshay's success is due in large part to the tireless efforts of Principal Howard Lappin, described by various media as a charismatic, no-nonsense, dedicated, and skilled leader, someone uniquely effective in mobilizing people and resources. Foshay receives additional support as a New American School, a Phase I LEARN School, a California 1274 Restructuring Demonstration Site, a Healthy Start Implementation Site, and one of the University of Southern California's Family of Five Schools, with which the Center shares over 100 school-community-based programs.[12]

In order to best utilize time, space, and resources, Foshay's K–12 population of nearly 3,500 students (70 percent Hispanic; 30 percent African American) operates on several schedules. The 188 K–5 students attend school according to the traditional 180-day school year calendar. The 2,600 grade 6–8 students, however, function on an entirely different schedule—a 163 extended-day, three-track schedule. This "Concept 6" configuration divides students into three groups, with one of the three groups on vacation/attending intersession at any given time (two vacations/intersessions—extra learning time—of 41 days each are offered during the academic year). The 700 grade 9–12 students also share the year-round schedule, but follow a single track (i.e., all 700 students attend school at the same time). Foshay also offers extensive Saturday and after-school programs, which include tutoring, intervention for failing students, enrichment classes, sports, and a gang-diversion initiative.

States Principal Lappin, "Time is a constraint only if you make it one. Even with a year-round schedule, we are able to manipulate time to make it work for us." Lappin cites the installation of

[10] The information in this update was derived from written correspondence with James A. Foshay Learning Center Principal Howard Lappin. Sources for all other information have been footnoted.

[11] Gary Libman, "Howard Lappin's Vision," *USC Trojan Family Magazine* (Summer 1998). To view this article online, go to: www.foshay.k12.ca.us, and click on "Foshay in the News."

[12] Howard Lappin, "Principal's Welcome," Foshay Learning Center Website: www.foshay.k12.ca.us.

modular bells, a device that provides teachers and students with additional learning time and allows teachers to meet with fewer students per day. Continues Lappin, "It would be wonderful if we had the luxury of being extended-year versus year-round. That's just not possible in our overcrowded community."

Originally featured in the 1994 report for its year-round education program, today's James A. Foshay Learning Center qualifies for recognition on several fronts, including its 1996 designation as a California Distinguished School. In addition to this honor, Principal Howard Lappin was named a *Reader's Digest* 1995 "American Hero in Education" and California's 1998 Secondary-School Principal of the Year.[13]

Foshay, as is reflected in these various distinctions, is a very different place from when Lappin arrived in 1989. "Wired" classrooms, a new, contemporary library, and a school-community health center provide students and neighborhood members with a stimulating, safe, and clean place in which to congregate.[14]

In addition to physical facility improvements, reports Lappin, "Our test scores have continued to go up,[15] as has our attendance (6 percent absentee rate per day; less than 2 percent dropout rate per year[16]). Over 96 percent of our seniors graduate, with almost 98 percent accepted into college—70 percent to a four-year program. This in a school where over 90 percent of the students qualify for the National Lunch Program."

"Kids need to believe they can succeed," insists Lappin, "and many have never been told that. And they have to be held to very high standards. You can't say that they're a minority, they're poor, and therefore you can't teach the same. That's garbage."[17]

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the James A. Foshay Learning Center, write or call: Howard Lappin, Principal, James A. Foshay Learning Center, 3751 Harvard Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90018; Ph: (323) 735-0241; Learning Center Website: www.foshay.k12.ca.us

[13] Libman, "Howard Lappin's Vision."
[14] Ibid.
[15] In March 2000, Foshay's high school was ranked among the top 100 high schools in the U.S. for student participation in the Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) tests taken. To view the article online, go to: www.foshay.k12.ca.us, click on "Foshay in the News," and click on "Foshay Ranks Among Top 100 High Schools in Getting Students to Excel."
[16] Libman, "Howard Lappin's Vision."
[17] As quoted in: Libman, "Howard's Lappin's Vision."

Recommendations

AS VARIOUS PANACEAS have been advanced in the last decade to solve the problems of learning in America, education reform has moved in fits and starts. Indeed, as different helmsmen have seized the wheel, the ship of education reform has gone around in circles. If we have learned anything from these efforts, it is that no single solution exists for the problems of American schools.

Reform can succeed only if it is broad and comprehensive, attacking many problems simultaneously. In that effort, high standards and time are more than simply additional oars in the water. With standards as our compass, time can be the rudder of reform.

In our judgement, educators have created a false dilemma in debating whether additional instructional time can be found within the confines of the current day and calendar, or whether it needs to be sought by extending both. False dilemmas produce bad choices. To meet new demands, the U.S. needs both—the best use of available time and more time.

EIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS

We offer eight recommendations to help put time at the top of the nation's reform agenda:

I. Reinvent schools around learning, not time.

II. Fix the design flaw: Use time in new and better ways.

III. Establish an academic day.

IV. Keep schools open longer to meet the needs of children and communities.

V. Give teachers the time they need.

VI. Invest in technology.

VII. Develop local action plans to transform schools.

VIII. Share the responsibility: finger pointing and evasion must end.

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I. Reinvent Schools Around Learning, Not Time

We recommend a commitment to bring every child in the U.S. to world-class standards in core academic areas.

By far the most important part of this Commission's charge relates not to time but to student learning. The first issue is not "How much time is enough?" but "What are we trying to accomplish?" As witnesses repeatedly told the Commission, there is no point to adding more time to today's schools if it is used in the same way. We must use time in new, different, and better ways.

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

***Q** How can communities financially support a longer school year when educational funding is undergoing such debate in so many communities across the U.S.?*

A Financial experts estimate that each day of K–12 public school education in the U.S. costs approximately $1.25 billion. So adding as few as five days (one week) of instruction can cost taxpayers a considerable chunk of money. Yet that amount of money is manageable if 1) taxpayers see the increase of instructional time as wise and support the idea with additional tax revenues and 2) hard choices are made in regard to the distribution of already-available revenues.

School districts should determine daily costs of operating local schools before initiating a discussion of lengthening the school year. Once these figures are known, then a decision to lengthen the year will require 1) support from local taxpayers in the form of increased taxes or 2) rethinking district priorities about resources that are currently available.

***Q** Don't students, especially elementary school students, need a substantial summer break?*

A All humans need and enjoy breaks from life routines. That is why holidays, weekends, and vacations are important parts of our lives. Yet, how long should the time away from the routine be? What would a "substantial" break include? Most important, does each person (i.e., student) require exactly the same length of break?

The Thanksgiving break in the U.S. and Canada is relatively short, but prized by many families. The winter holiday, anchored by Christmas/New Year's, tends to last for two to three weeks and can be a magical time for many children. These short vacations from school surely offer a respite from the routine.

There is no authentic research that argues persuasively that students need eight to twelve weeks in a row away from formal schooling. The important question for each community to ask and answer, then, is how long does summer vacation really need to be? Four weeks? Five? Seven?

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 15, 26, 36, 46, 56, 69; school updates, pp. 23, 53, 75.

TEAM TEACHING

A growing amount of research links the absence of caring adults and good role models with poor outcomes for the increasing numbers of at-risk children. Children from dysfunctional, single-parent, or two-working-parent families have few opportunities to observe and interact positively with adults going about their lives. Team teaching broadens children's experiential base in new and exciting ways. A second adult in the classroom offers greater possibilities for children to observe, model, and develop positive communication skills and well-rounded attitudes about adult relationships at home and at work. They have more adult examples, sooner, with which to compare their own ideas and thus come to some ownership of their own beliefs. As one high school student put it, "Having two teachers' opinions helps you learn to make your own opinion."[18]

***Q** I have been the sole teacher in my classroom for ten years. What are the advantages of team teaching?*

A Team teaching offers many advantages. For the teacher, the opportunity for professional growth is paramount. Through modeling and observation, teachers are able to learn from each other's strengths, often resulting in improved instructional experiences and an expanded, more creative curriculum. On the practical side, sharing the workload can be a welcome benefit. Planning together, preparing activities, observing students, grading papers, and conferencing with parents can all be shared. It is also possible for one teacher to leave the room when those unexpected emergencies arise.

As for the students, they, too, benefit from a team-teaching situation. One advantage is that there is a greater opportunity for one-on-one time with a teacher. Also, considering that many children today come from dysfunctional families, the opportunity to observe positive adult interactions is irreplaceable. Some other advantages include more exposure to different teachers' personalities, styles, and skills; more grouping options; the availability of another adult in times of need; more than one adult perspective; and more input at parent conferences.

It is interesting that of all the advantages listed above, there is still one that team teachers almost always put on the top of their list—support, support, support! The feeling of not being alone coupled with the opportunity to "share the moment" is perhaps the greatest gift of all.

Team teaching is like a marriage, and finding the right partner is extremely important. To keep this partnership running smoothly, it is essential that the lines of communication remain open. When this is accomplished, the bonding that occurs can be a life support. In the words of one team, "We laugh together, we cry together, and we don't have to bore our spouses at home!"

For related topics, see Q&A, p. 49; school updates, pp. 23, 81.

[18] The Northern Nevada Writing Project Teacher-Researcher Group, *Team Teaching*, (Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 1996), 39.

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The commission is convinced the following areas represent the common core all students should master: English and language arts, mathematics, science, civics, history, geography, the arts, and foreign languages. This core defines a set of expectations students abroad are routinely expected to meet. American students can meet them as well.

Regular assessments at different stages of students' lives should require every student to demonstrate a firm grasp of demanding material in each of these areas, a grasp extending far beyond the trivial demands of most multiple-choice tests. They should assess not only the mastery of essential facts, but also the student's ability to write, reason, and analyze.

II. Fix the Design Flaw: Use Time in New and Better Ways

We recommend that state and local boards work with schools to redesign education so that time becomes a factor supporting learning, not a boundary marking its limits.

The conviction that learning goals should be fixed and that time should be a flexible resource opens up profound opportunities for change.

At a minimum, fixing the design flaw means recognizing that very young children enter school at very different levels of readiness. Some enter kindergarten already reading. Others readily manage computer programs appropriate to their age and skill levels. But some cannot recognize letters from the alphabet or identify numbers or pictures. Sadly, too many are already abused and neglected. School readiness is the basic foundation on which the rest of the school program is built.

SCHOOL READINESS IS THE BASIC FOUNDATION ON WHICH THE REST OF THE SCHOOL PROGRAM IS BUILT.

Fixing the design flaw also makes possible radical change in the teaching and learning process. New uses of time ensure that schools rely much less on the 51-minute period, after which teachers and students drop everything to rush off to the next class. Block scheduling—the use of two or more periods for extended exploration of complex topics or for science laboratories—should become more common. Providing a more flexible school day could also permit American schools to follow international practice—between classes, students remain in the room and teachers come to them.

A more flexible time schedule is likely to encourage greater use of team teaching, in which groups of teachers, often from different disciplines, work together with students. Greater flexibility in the schedule will also make it easier for schools to take advantage of instruction resources in the community—workplaces, libraries, churches, and community youth groups—and to work effectively with emerging technologies.

Fixing the design flaw means that grouping children by age should become a thing of the past. It makes no more sense to put a computer-literate second-grader in *Introduction to Computers* than it does

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

***Q** I have twenty-nine students in my room; how am I supposed to meet the needs of all my struggling learners, especially when students are being pulled out of the room for specialists and extra help?*

A The key is in grouping strategies and centers. Group students in heterogeneous groups while they are working on skills or on open problem-solving activities where they may need help from peers. Then, call students to you (no more than two or three at a time) in small, same-skill (homogeneous) groups for initial teaching or for reinforcement of skills already taught in any content area. Work with these small groups for short blocks of time, then call for another set of students who are struggling with a common skill. Repeat this process for as long as the class period allows.

Where do centers come in here? As a management tool. When a child in the classroom who is not working with you in a small same-skill group needs help beyond that of a peer, s/he can go to a center and work until you are able to work with him/her. The centers must be self-directed so that the student can accomplish the center's objective with little or no help. How is this done? Keep them simple: no more than three steps in the directions. Center activities should be open-ended to allow for diversity in response and skill ability levels. These centers, to keep them meaningful and challenging, should reflect the concept (or theme) units being studied by the entire class.

Before the student leaves her/his seat to work at a center, a flag, a colored stick, or some highly visible indicator should be raised at his/her desk so that when you are through with your small group, you can look out at the class to see who needs help. Even though the child who needs help is at a center, you will know that s/he needs help on an assignment at his/her desk.

Pulling struggling learners into these small same-skill groups can be done at any time the class is working on independent practice activities. Therefore, it matters not if the students are being pulled out for specialists or extra help. Skill grouping can be done at any time of the day, for short or long periods at a time, depending on when the class is working on independent practice activities.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 32, 37.

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to place a recent Hispanic immigrant in *Introductory Spanish*. Both should be placed at their level of accomplishment. Although the Commission does not believe 15-year-olds should leave high school early, meeting high performance standards in key subjects should be the requirement for the high school diploma, not simply seat time or Carnegie units. In the case of genuinely exceptional students who meet these requirements while very young, schools should offer them the opportunity to take advanced courses.

Above all, fixing the flaw means that time should be adjusted to meet the individual needs of learners, rather than the administrative convenience of adults. The dimensions of time in the learning process extend far beyond whether one student needs more time and another

THE ISSUE IS NOT SIMPLY TEACHERS. IT IS NOT SIMPLY TIME. THE REAL ISSUE IS EDUCATION QUALITY.

can do with less. The flexible use of time can permit more individualized instruction.

We should not forget that students are like adults in many ways. Some are able to focus intensely on demanding materials for long periods; others need more frequent breaks. Many students, like many adults, learn best by reading; some learn best by listening; others, by doing, or even talking among themselves. Offering more frequent breaks, providing more opportunities for hands-on learning, encouraging group work—these techniques and others can parole some of the students who today feel most confined by the school's rigid time demands.

All of these possibilities—and many others—lie within reach if the design flaw is fixed. All of them are much more difficult within the prison of time-bound education.

COMMUNITY

***Q** I think it is important for the community (such as school board members) to be involved in school policy decisions, but aren't teachers really the ones who should be making the decisions, as they are in the classroom dealing with all sorts of issues every day?*

A Yes. Since the emergence in the 1980s of a series of reports sharply criticizing our schools and proposing a wide range of reforms in curriculum instruction, governance, and teacher preparation, restructuring has dominated the conversations about American education. The concept of restructuring reflects fundamental changes in thinking about the purposes of schooling and the nature of relationships among the adults who contribute to students' education. The new way to think about school is not reflective of teachers being the only ones who make decisions.

The new way of thinking is a rejection of the factory model of education in which students are seen as products to be sorted, certified, or discarded, and teachers are seen as those who dispense knowledge and function at the bottom of a hierarchical framework. The new model of restructuring involves thinking about the purpose of school and how it can help all students succeed. In this conceptualization, an interactive community of learners replaces the old factory model. Teachers are seen as leaders in the effort to spark collaboration, experimentation, and inquiry to support school improvement. Parents and community members are seen not only as resources to the school but also as clients. In school systems throughout the country, parent and community representation is being sought on school-based management teams. Sharing of information among adults in the school building and across systems is encouraged. School boards are part of the entire school community and represent the will of the people. Many school boards welcome information from teachers. Therefore, teachers might want to consider making presentations to school boards.

If decision-making occurs in a richly collaborative context, then schools can be expected to be more innovative and more accountable not only for the quality of instruction to students but also for the students' academic success.

For related topic, see Q&A, p. 69.

III. Establish an Academic Day

We recommend that schools provide additional academic time by reclaiming the school day for academic instruction.

The Commission is convinced that if American students are to meet world-class standards, all children will need more academic time. Reclaiming the academic day means providing at least 5.5 hours of *core academic instructional time* daily. That time should be devoted exclusively to the common core of subjects identified in Recommendation I.

The Commission's analysis of how time is currently used in American schools makes one thing clear: even within the confines of a 180-day school year, reclaiming the academic day should, alone, nearly double the amount of instructional time in core curriculum areas. For some students, reclaiming the academic day will provide all the additional time they need to meet new standards. For most others, however, more academic time will be required.

Establishing an academic day means, in essence, that the existing school day will be devoted almost exclusively to core academic instruction. What this means is obvious: many worthwhile student programs—athletics, clubs, and other activities—will have to be sacrificed unless the school day is lengthened. We do not believe they should be sacrificed, or that communities will agree to do without them. At the same time, we cannot agree to sacrificing the academic core of the school day to other activities. Instead, all student activities should be offered during a longer school day.

Compensatory programs and special efforts for the gifted and talented can be easily provided during the longer school day. Language instruction for non-native English speakers should also be provided in this longer day. Students who want to accelerate their studies, perhaps spending only three years in high school, can also use this time.

IV. Keep Schools Open Longer to Meet the Needs of Children and Communities

We recommend that schools respond to the needs of today's students by remaining open longer during the day and that some schools in every district remain open throughout the year.

No magic number of hours in the day, or days in the year, will guarantee learning for all students. As a rule of thumb, about 5.5 hours of core academic instruction daily is a useful frame of reference for the typical student. But it is only a frame of reference. Many students will need more time; some will need less.

As noted under Recommendation III, establishing an academic day of necessity requires lengthening the school day, both for extracurric-

ular activities and for time to offer students academic programs designed to give them special help or opportunities.

Schools open throughout the year can also provide many services to adults, serving as centers in which community agencies offer adult education; "intergenerational" literacy efforts, which teach parents and children together; and programs stressing, for example, parenting or job skills. When the walls of the prison of time are torn down, schools can realize their full potential as community learning centers, vibrant and responsive to the educational needs of citizens of every age.

We stress again that many children, in many different communities, are growing up today without the family and community support taken for granted when the public school was created 150 years ago. The documented need for child care and the uncoordinated nature of the variety of public and private providers now trying to meet it—licensed and unlicensed, for-profit and not-for-profit, in homes and in community facilities—can no longer be ignored.

No single agency can meet all of the needs of today's families, nor can any major public agency ignore them. Extended-day services that offer safe havens for children in troubled neighborhoods are a logical solution to the child care problem, a problem that does not go away when schools close for the summer. Moreover, schools have every interest in making sure that a wide variety of other services—immunizations, health screening, nutrition, and mental health, among others—are available to children and their families. Without such services, it is unlikely that the first of the National Education Goals ("school readiness") can be achieved.

Fixing the design flaw requires acknowledging something else as well: state mandatory attendance requirements defining how many days students should attend school should not define how many days schools should remain open. In fact, state financial support should encourage more learning time. If Americans are ever to escape the education time trap, some schools in every district should be open throughout the year so that students can find the help they need, when they need it.

Finally, we note that, in suggesting greater use of school facilities to meet the needs of children and communities, we are not recommending that schools provide these services directly or pay for them. Schools should act as advocates, insisting that the needs of children and families be met and making school facilities available whenever possible for services essential to student learning.

V. Give Teachers the Time They Need

We recommend that teachers be provided with the professional time and opportunities they need to do their jobs.

The daily working life of most teachers is one of unrelieved time pressure and isolation; they work, largely alone, in a classroom of 25–30

children or adolescents for hours every day. Unlike teachers in many systems overseas, who can take advantage of continual, daily opportunities for professional development, American teachers have little time for preparation, planning, cooperation, or professional growth. The Commission believes that time for planning and professional development is urgently needed—not as a frill or an add-on, but as a major aspect of the agreement between teachers and districts.

The whole question of teachers and time needs to be rethought in a serious and systematic way. The issue is not simply teachers. It is not just time. The real issue is education quality. Teachers need time to develop effective lessons. They need time to assess students in meaningful ways and discuss the results with students individually. They need time to talk to students and listen to them, and to confer with parents and other family members. They need time to read professional journals, interact with their colleagues, and watch outstanding teachers demonstrate new strategies.

Districts can provide this time in several ways: extending the contract year to pay teachers for professional development, using the longer day for the same purpose, or providing for the widespread and systematic use of a cadre of well-prepared, full-time, substitute teachers.

The last thing districts should encourage is sending children home to provide time for "teacher professional days." We will never have truly effective schools while teachers' needs are met at the expense of students' learning time.

THE FINGER POINTING AND EVASIONS MUST COME TO AN END—UP AND DOWN THE LINE, FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THE FAMILY AND STUDENT.

TIME-ON-TASK

***Q** I have been teaching in elementary schools for 15 years, and the amount of time we are allocated for core academic instruction is dwindling each year. What are some suggestions I might take back to my school board?*

A Educators are in a tough position. Because we care about children, we often undertake more activities than we have time to accomplish. For example, because we know that children learn better on a full stomach, we institute a breakfast program, or because we feel that children should experience the joy of playing a musical instrument, we provide instrument lessons.

Unfortunately, the length of each day is no longer now than it was 100 years ago. The more activities we add to the school day, the less time we are able to spend on each activity and core curriculum. Since educators struggle with this reality every day, they are very familiar with the trade-off that must be made. Try engaging your school board and other community members in a discussion about setting priorities for the school day and trying to utilize the additional time that children have outside of the school day to conduct some of the activities in which we want children to participate.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 17, 31.

VI. Invest in Technology

We recommend that schools seize on the promise of new technologies to increase productivity, enhance student achievement, and expand learning time.

Technology is a great unrealized hope in education reform. It can transform learning by both improving the effectiveness of existing time and making more time available through self-guided instruction, both in school and out. Technology has already changed much of the rest of American society—profit and non-profit, private sector and government alike—because it makes it possible to produce more with less. A similar revolution is possible in education.

MULTIAGE/LOOPING

***Q** My school district refuses to investigate the possibility of offering year-round schools and longer class days. Are there any other configurations that might benefit all students, especially struggling learners?*

A The threat of increased spending, an unwillingness/fear of change, and a lack of knowledge often deter communities from embracing school configurations different from the status quo. Fortunately, there are alternatives that incur no additional cost for school districts and that provide more quality time for students. Two such alternatives are multiage classrooms and looping classrooms.

A multiage classroom is just that—a classroom in which students from two or three grade levels are instructed by the same teacher(s) until they have completed the highest grade represented in that room. For example, if a first-grade student is in a first/second-grade multiage classroom, s/he remains in the same class with the same teacher(s) for two or more years.

A looping classroom pairs a teacher with a group of students in the same grade level for two or more years. For example, if a looping teacher instructs a first-grade class the first year, that teacher will move on to the second grade with that same group of students to instruct them for their second-grade year.

Both the multiage and looping configurations provide numerous benefits, including:

- less transition and acquaintance time (personal/personality, class expectations, skills, etc.) for teachers and students;
- more opportunities for "experienced" multiage/looping students to be leaders and model appropriate behaviors, skills, and routines for younger and/or new students, thus providing the teacher with more time for individual and group instruction;
- increased comfort and stability for students who might otherwise be apprehensive and nervous about starting each school year with a new teacher;
- and a greater opportunity for students to form long-lasting relationships.

At a minimum, computers and other technological aids promise to rid teachers and administrators of the mundane record keeping that is such a characteristic of school life today, permitting teachers to spend more time designing instructional programs for their students.

But the true promise of technology lies in the classroom. Technology makes it possible for today's schools to escape the assembly-line mentality of the "factory model" school. With emerging hardware and software, educators can personalize learning.

Instead of the lockstep of lecture and laboratory, computers and other new telecommunications technologies make it possible for students to move at their own pace. Effective learning technologies have already demonstrated their ability to pique student interest and increase motivation, encouraging students not only to spend more of their own time in learning but also to be more deeply involved in what they are doing.

Finally, it should be noted that the "information superhighway" can reshape education as it will other areas of American life. The school revolution, however, depends both on a concerted investment strategy to help educators obtain these technologies and on educators' confronting their reluctance to supplement the techniques of the nineteenth century (textbooks, chalk and blackboards) with the technologies of the twenty-first (CD-ROMs, modems, and fiber optics). They must do so. In order to help them, states should establish special funds to provide low-interest loans and grants, and they should create large-scale purchasing agreements for new technologies and teacher training in their use.

VII. Develop Local Action Plans to Transform Schools

We recommend that every district convene local leaders to develop action plans that offer different school options and encourage parents, students, and teachers to choose among them.

School reform cannot work if it is imposed on the community top-down. Genuine, long-lasting reform grows from the grass roots.

The Commission believes every community must engage in a community-wide debate about the shape and future of its schools. To that end, we encourage every district, with the support of the superintendent and local school board, to engage major school stakeholders in a comprehensive, long-term dialog about the hopes, aspirations, and future directions of local education. The conversation should include students, parents, taxpayers, employers, and representatives of public assistance, juvenile justice, health, and other social services agencies. It should be organized around learning time. If this conversation is to

be productive, it is essential to include teachers and administrators as equal partners.

We are convinced that larger school districts can offer families a wide array of alternative school calendars by encouraging individual schools to adopt distinctive approaches. The more options, the better. No single configuration will satisfy every need. Districts of any size, with a sense of vision, boldness, and entrepreneurship can experiment with block scheduling, team teaching, longer days and years, and extending time with new distance-learning technologies.

No community in the U.S. is so small or impoverished that it cannot benefit from an experiment in changing the way it uses time—if not in extending the day or year, then at least in re-configuring how it uses the time now available.

The Commission wants to stress that this recommendation provides a real opportunity for local leadership groups—the business community, colleges and universities, churches, civic groups, newspapers, and the electronic media—to go beyond criticizing schools by helping frame the education debate community by community. This is not just a task for educators. There can be no doubt that the 1989 Education Summit, convened under the leadership of the White House and the nation's governors, went a long way toward focusing Americans on the goals they hold in common for their schools. Local leaders can do a lot to transform their communities and their schools by convening similar education summits, county by county, city by city, district by district, and if need be, school by school.

Finally, the Commission issues a challenge to local school boards: use your time to perform the leadership role for which you have been elected or appointed.

Recent analyses demonstrate convincingly that far too many boards function as managers instead of as policymakers. School board time should be devoted to local policy, goals, and the education needs of children, not to micro-management of school operations.

Our challenge: help your community crystallize a vision for its school.

VIII. Share the Responsibility: Finger Pointing and Evasion Must End

We recommend that all of our people shoulder their individual responsibilities to transform learning in America.

No single recommendation can capture the essential point with which the Commission concluded the first chapter of this report: learning must become a national obsession in the U.S.

In America's great education debate, we find too often a belief that the solution is up to government or "the system." Nothing could be

further from the truth. It is up to us. Most of what needs to be done can be done only by the people most directly involved. There are no shortcuts. Lighting will not strike and transform American schools if each of us acts as though the task belongs to somebody else.

To put learning in America powerfully back on track, everyone will have to do more, make sacrifices, and work harder. Great institutions like the American school do not fail simply because they col-

BLOCK SCHEDULING

Q What is block scheduling? What are the benefits of block scheduling? Is block scheduling a feasible alternative scheduling process for middle and high school students?

A Block scheduling is a way to arrange the academic day into three or four classes, all of which meet longer than the traditional 45- to 55-minute periods. With the increased instructional time, schools have found creative ways to section their time. Some schools operate on a 4/4 plan, which allows students to enroll in four courses each semester (eight courses during the year), with the remaining time for lunch or additional assistance. Other schools operate on a trimester plan, so those students take two-hour courses, with two 60-minute periods being available for students who need additional time to learn the content. A third schedule being used is the alternate day schedule, designed for seven courses (classes meet in double periods one day and another three the next day). One period/class meets daily throughout the year.

Block scheduling benefits teachers and students alike in several ways:

- Learning is enhanced because the additional time allows for in-depth exploration of content. This is especially true if teachers use a variety of instructional methods during the allotted time.
- Teachers have more time to interact with individual students, and, with the study periods that are available, students receive assistance before they experience failure.
- Discipline problems are reduced because there is a decrease in the time students are in the halls and other unsupervised areas.
- Students have an increased opportunity to explore a variety of topics. In the 4/4 schedule, students can enroll in eight courses per year (32 courses during their high school career). Depending on state requirements for graduation, some students can complete high school in three years. Many students enroll in college courses during the traditional senior year.
- The number of teacher preparations is decreased, which allows for more thorough planning.

Block scheduling is a very feasible alternative for middle and high schools, provided teachers have professional development to enlarge their repertoire of instructional methods. Otherwise, far too many teachers will continue to lecture, particularly at the high school level, and will not use the additional time to reach the learning needs of the individual students. Those teachers and students who use the additional time in deep exploration of content, utilizing a variety of strategies, experience the thrill of learning.

For related topic, see school update, p. 81.

AMERICAN STUDENTS WILL HAVE THEIR BEST CHANCE AT SUCCESS WHEN THEY ARE NO LONGER SERVING TIME, BUT WHEN TIME IS SERVING THEM.

lapse from within. Complacency within combines with public apathy to enfeeble institutions, leaving behind impressive but empty facades.

The implications are clear. Schools cannot do the job alone. All of us have to shoulder our responsibilities. If we think this transformation is too difficult, we must again learn the wisdom of the African proverb "It takes a whole village to raise a child."

It takes a family to raise a child. Parents are more than their children's "first teachers"—they are lifelong examples bearing witness to community norms and expectations, to the values that give meaning, texture, and a sense of purpose to life.

It takes communities to raise a child. But in place of healthy communities, too often we find neighborhoods deteriorating amidst the alienation, rootlessness, and despair of violent streets.

It takes schools to raise a child. But where there should be a shared sense of common purpose among school, family, and community, too often we find a circle of blame. Parents blame the community for the child's problems. Communities blame the school. And the school, too frequently, blames both. Then it closes itself off in its time-bound world.

The finger pointing and evasions must come to an end—up and down the line, from the federal government to the family and the student. Although concrete recommendations are difficult to make, several ground rules point the way ahead.

Government should focus on results, not red tape. The sheer number of rules and regulations from federal and state governments hamstringing schools has grown beyond reason. Their cumulative effect is to handcuff schools.

All federal programs should follow the larger intent of the Clinton Administration's legislation, *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. This bipartisan legislation puts the National Education Goals into statutory language. It promises to free local schools from regulation in favor of accountability. It focuses on results, not red tape.

The federal government should encourage local schools to use categorical programs to supplement *learning time* for target students. Too often these programs have defeated their own purpose: funds have been used for programs that replace the school's learning time. They should support after-school, weekend, and summer programs.

At the state level, the Commission applauds states such as Kentucky and Washington, which have adopted comprehensive education reform efforts, most of which promise to (1) limit regulatory oversight in return for demonstrated results in the schools; (2) offer additional time for teachers' professional development; and (3) provide sanctions and rewards for schools based on performance.

It is at the school-district and local-board levels that we find the major possibilities for freeing schools of red tape in favor of accountability. A large number of promising experiments are under way

Q *I discovered* Prisoners of Time *at a conference in 1995. Help me break this study down into a few key points, as I wish to share the information with my colleagues at an upcoming meeting. What message do you think educators should take away from this report? Why is this message significant?*

A When we look at all the issues that affect children in school today, the most significant is the lack of academic time. The non-educational demands on academic time are ever-increasing, and unless we confront this critical issue, we will be enabling those demands to squander away that much-needed time for instruction. As educators, we have to be at the forefront of this issue. We must be advocates for today's and tomorrow's children. In *Prisoners of Time*, the need for academic time, in addition to a variety of recommendations for dealing with this issue, are clearly articulated. This report provides the insight one needs to understand the dimensions of the problem.

We have gained a great deal of knowledge about learning in the past 150 years, yet our structure of time has changed little to accommodate all the demands that have been placed on today's schools. If we are to stay competitive with those countries that have provided more academic time for their students, we must take a serious look at how we configure our schedules and what we teach within those schedules. And although today's technology can help, the real measure of success will be how we readjust our school day to maximize academic time. We need to help our students meet the needs of today's world.

Q Prisoners of Time *features schools around the country that have embraced reform and made education work in their communities. How can I start a conversation about school change in my community?*

A This is a particularly difficult time to improve parent and community involvement in education. Families in today's modern society are fragmented and face ever-growing demands on their time. However, the critical influence the family has on student achievement is well known. Therefore, we, as educators, must remain committed to the responsibility we have to communicate with parents.

Not all practices to involve families lead quickly to conversations about school change. However, practices such as weekly newsletters, parent education workshops, open houses, volunteer programs, parent conferences, enrichment packets, "homework hotlines," and opening school decisions to input from parents and others in the community might lead FIRST to adults' feeling attachment, support, and ownership of the school. One specific strategy that has been successful in reaching parents for whom coming to school is difficult is to send home a video containing information about the school or classroom.

Individuals and organizations from the community can be invited to participate in the school in many ways as well. Serving as tutors, guest speakers, and sponsors of events are just some of the ways the local community can get involved. Once parents and community members understand there is a sincere desire on the part of the school to collaborate on behalf of students, dialog around the topic of school reform can be initiated via small focus groups, site-based decision teams, interactive websites, and other activities that offer opportunities for two-way communication among the home, the community, and the school.

For related topics, see Q&A, p. 50; school updates, pp. 23, 43, 53, 75, 81.

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Q *Rural and urban schools alike have always educated children of poverty. How have things changed today?*

A Rural and urban poverty are predominant factors that influence student achievement, which, without a doubt, is compounded further by issues related to time. Unfortunately, the most pressing challenges faced today by those who serve children of poverty in rural and urban settings are often highly complex and political. These issues include:

- State accountability systems and mandated grade-specific achievement testing
- Student transiency and mobility
- The one-size-fits-all approach to curriculum and instruction
- Language acquisition
- Vouchers

Children from poverty, due to many factors, do not start school at the same point as children from middle- and upper-income families. For many children of poverty, the structures of mandated tests do not correlate with their background knowledge and learning styles. These structures, therefore, can negatively affect test scores. While mandated achievement testing, designed to show comparisons among schools on the state, regional, or national level, is a helpful tool for many educators, the downside of testing for children from poverty is the fact that such testing can be used as an accountability measure. State-level accountability systems can further perpetuate the inequities seen in student achievement, as schools in high-poverty areas are often ranked below their middle- and upper-income counterparts. Unfortunately, these schools can become scapegoats for the purpose of promoting certain agendas.

Why do many children from poverty struggle in school? First, transiency causes disruptions in student learning because, in part, schools use different approaches to teaching, and expectations differ from school to school and from state to state. Frequent disruption in a child's educational career often manifests itself in children of poverty's falling behind in school.

Second, the one-size-fits-all approach, still present in some schools today, leaves behind the individual needs of students who don't fit into the curriculum. The outcome of this approach is usually student failure, grade-level retention, and overrepresentation in special education programs.

Third, language acquisition for many minority students from poor families can hinder students from achieving success in school. Many schools find themselves ill-equipped to serve children who are non-English or limited-English speakers.

Fourth, vouchers are designed to give children in low-performing schools alternatives to a quality education. Space constraints and fear that children of poverty may lower a school's average test scores, however, may prevent some voucher schools from opening their doors to those students who need the most assistance.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 34, 35, 40.

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***Q** If school is a safe place for a child of poverty, is that child still considered an at-risk student?*

A Yes, risk factors for children of poverty range far beyond the doors of school. There are many societal problems, and often there are problems in the home lives of these children. The words "at risk" may define too narrowly the negative factors that children from poverty can often face. This is not to say that all children from poverty are at risk, but that living in poverty increases the likelihood for certain risks. The most pressing risk factors that reach beyond the school for children of poverty are:

- Physical safety
- Peer influences
- Family influences
- Health-risk factors
- Exposure to crime
- Exposure to negative role models

The risk of the violation of physical safety is often present in poverty due to living conditions and neighborhoods where families affected by poverty live. Child abuse and neglect have a higher incidence among children from poverty, which detracts from personal safety. Also, many neighborhoods of polarized poverty are unsafe due to dilapidated buildings, and safe community facilities are often non-existent. Physical safety can also be jeopardized by crime rates in certain areas.

Peer influences outside the school can create risk factors for children of poverty. In urban poverty, there are many opportunities for children to become involved in drugs, gang activity, and criminal behavior. These risk factors come in part from negative role models and lack of parent availability and supervision.

Family influences can be both positive and negative for children of poverty. Negative family influences are risk factors and manifest themselves through dysfunctional parents, poor sibling role models, parents or extended family members who abuse drugs, and family role models who demonstrate negative behavior that children emulate.

Health-risk factors among people living in poverty are caused by poor living conditions, lack of proper preventative care, lack of hygiene, and lapse in immunizations. Homes are often in disrepair, which can have significant health violations, including rodent and insect infestation, inoperative plumbing, and poorly functioning heating systems. Children of poverty also have a high incidence of poor dental care, which can lead to infection and pain if left untreated. Children who have poor hygiene and children who have not been properly immunized are at risk.

Living in poverty can also lead to exposure to crime for children. In urban poverty, children often become street wise at an early age and are often aware of the crime in their neighborhoods. At times, young children are targeted and exploited by criminals. The risk factors for children becoming involved in crime are also high in the urban setting.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 34, 35, 40, 74.

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MINORITIES

***Q** In regard to education, what challenges do minorities and schools with a high minority population face today?*

A Minority students and America's education system find themselves in a catch-22. Non-English speaking students, for example, come to America with their families to find a better life.

But the rapid influx of people into the U.S., and therefore into the education system, challenges teachers to uphold standards in under-funded, overcrowded schools. This places pressure on educators, students, and institutions, and, some feel, potentially takes valuable time away from first-generation American students and legal immigrant students whose parents contribute significantly to the economy. In addition, some feel that non-English-speaking minorities make high standards even more difficult to achieve and maintain, and when test scores fail, so too, in the eyes of the country, do those schools.

Minorities also come under public scrutiny by way of the media, who, when reporting stories of crime and poverty, often negatively depict African Americans and Hispanics. Part of this depiction is derived from the fact that minorities are disproportionately represented among prison populations.[19] Why? Poverty, in large part, is a causal factor of crime, and a significant percentage of minorities inhabit areas of the U.S. most plagued by poverty. To further the stereotype, many communities are divided among racial boundaries, and many schools are as segregated today as they were before the school busing movement of the 1970s. In addition, low-income communities historically have high dropout rates among high school students, low achievement rates at all levels, and social and crime issues. All of these factors further fuel the perception that minorities are part of the "education problem."

So, the challenges are great and the issues complex for students, teachers, and parents on all levels—political, social, and economic. As a nation, in the face of such complexity, the question remains: How do we help *all* students achieve?

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 34, 35, 40, 74.

[19] Children's Defense Fund, *Yearbook 2000*, 111–112.

For related story, go to: National Public Radio (www.npr.org), select *All Things Considered*; select "archives"; go to June 2000; select June 8; scroll down to "Blacks and Whites in Prison."

around the country to free schools of burdensome district regulation. Many of these experiments revolve around time; many do not. We encourage school boards—through the local action plans suggestion in Recommendation VII—to examine these experiments and adapt the most promising to their own needs.

Higher education needs to get involved. Colleges and universities, as institutions, have been bystanders for the most part in the school reform debate. It is time they got involved. They can help in at least four ways.

First, higher education already offers a model that holds learning fixed and makes time a variable. Students can earn a bachelor's degree in three, four, even eight years; the same is true of doctoral study.

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Second, the school reform movement *cannot* succeed unless academic institutions honor the results of new standards and assessments. Admissions requirements should validate learning, not seat time.

Third, colleges and universities educating teachers must align their programs with the movement to higher standards. This will involve changing not only offerings in schools of education, but also the design of undergraduate programs in core disciplines.

Finally, a handful of colleges and universities across the country are struggling to reinvent local schools. There are 3,500 colleges and universities in the U.S.; therefore, there should be 3,500 examples. It is not necessary for a college or university to operate a school or district or provide medical checkups and family counseling—although some academic institutions are doing each of these things. But it is necessary to do *something*.

SANCTION/REWARD SYSTEM

***Q** Is the sanction/reward system healthy?*

A In an effort to hold schools accountable for student achievement, schools nationwide are rewarded, usually through additional monies, if state test scores are high, or punished if scores are low. Such punishments include holding failing students back a year, preventing students from graduating, suspending the principal, closing the school, state takeover, loss of school accreditation, or firing or transferring of teachers. All this on the basis of scores from a single test!

These rewards and sanctions are unfair because the scores are usually reflective of the students' educational and financial backgrounds. So, while teachers in wealthy school districts may be hardworking and skillful, the students' higher scores are largely the result of their socioeconomic status. Similarly, hardworking, skillful teachers in struggling socioeconomic areas receive criticism for students' lower scores. But, again, scores are heavily influenced by outside factors over which schools have no control. More money in schools will not directly or immediately affect what happens to students outside them, but needy districts, which are most often the ones with the lowest test scores, should receive substantial monies for facilities, resources, and other vital improvements.

The reward/sanction system may also promote poor teaching practices. Because some teachers tend to "teach to the test," scores can be raised higher through the use of brain-based teaching strategies, which are more likely to stimulate students to want to learn and achieve. Further, the reward/sanction system may force good educators out of the profession who quickly tire of the excessive demands and the resentment of having unnamed test-makers exert so much influence over the lives of teachers, children, and parents.

This strategy of "high stakes testing" has, in the words of author Linda Darling-Hammond, "failed wherever it has been tried."[20] In fact, Fair Tests' (Cambridge, Mass.) review of scores found that states without these tests are showing more improvement than those with them.

[20] See the Standards/Assessment/Homework section of Recommended Resources and Organizations for publications by Linda Darling-Hammond.

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The business world should keep up the pressure. Much of the impetus for school reform at the national, state, and local levels has been generated by business leaders insisting that changes in the workplace require radically different kinds of school graduates. Corporate and small business leaders have also been actively supporting reform coalitions, applying corporate techniques to school operations, and crafting a variety of one-on-one school partnerships in which individual firms work directly with individual classrooms, schools, or districts.

Now is no time for timidity in the school reform effort. Leaders cannot blow an uncertain trumpet. Business leaders must keep up the pressure for comprehensive reform to improve student achievement.

Parents, students, and teachers must lead the way. Finally, we want to speak directly to the people with the greatest stake in the learning enterprise—parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, and guardians, and teachers and students themselves.

To parents, grandparents, relatives, and guardians: With your support for the agenda for reform outlined in this document, success is ensured. Without it, we do not know how the agenda can be achieved.

You may worry that new academic standards will add to your children's stress. That is not our intent. In fact, that is why we insist that time be made a part of the standards discussion. Indeed, our hope is that schools will be more attractive, interesting, and lively places for students and adults alike when time becomes the servant of learning.

CHILDREN AND STRESS

***Q** Are children really any more stressed today than they were forty years ago? If yes, why?*

A Yes, children are much more stressed. According to the American Council on Children's Health, "40 percent of all children today are suffering stress symptoms. We are seeing very young children depressed." A Harris poll found that 76 percent of all parents agree that children are under more stress today. They are more stressed because there are more stressors than ever before: children lose their innocence earlier and are confronted with situations at too early an age that are too difficult for them to cope with or understand. For example, 40 percent of all children will experience divorce by age 18; More than 20 percent of all children live in poverty; 60 percent of all children go home to an empty house; more and more parents both work and are not available to guide and supervise children; violence and promiscuity permeate the media; and pressure to win in organized sports begins when children are five or six. Clearly, parents need to make themselves available to children more often; preschools and before- and after-school programs need to be improved in quality; and young children need more and higher-quality play and relaxation experiences. In general, families need to slow down the pace of their lives and protect children from premature exposure to these stressors.

For related topics, see Q&A's, pp. 34, 35, 40, 78.

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UPDATE: *Changing Times, Changing Schools*

MURFREESBORO CITY EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM, MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

MURFREESBORO CITY Extended School Program, now 14 years old, was the 1999 recipient of the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers Grant—and for good reason. This nationally recognized initiative offers after-school learning and enrichment activities at no cost to the school system or the community. Through affordable parent fees and federal, state, and private grants, Murfreesboro has built a self-sustaining program in which all elementary school students can participate. And to ensure the enrollment of at-risk students, scholarships are available to financially challenged families, and school-to-home transportation is provided.

Murfreesboro's elementary schools open their doors at 6:00 a.m. for before-school care, and they don't close again until 6:00 p.m. When asked how the Murfreesboro City Extended School Program has changed since the 1994 report, School Supervisor Peggy Seneker states that "Today's after-school program concentrates on increased cooperation with school personnel to ensure that after-school activities enhance school curriculum for the 2,000 participating students."

In addition, Seneker notes their program is constantly changing with the times. "For the past two years," she explains, "the school system and the Extended School Program have drastically altered their focus, from serving the individual child to serving the family unit."

Murfreesboro's expanded outreach program reflects this change and includes many alternatives for at-risk families, including preschool programs and family resource centers operated with local funds and conducted in the community's federal housing development; adult literacy classes in the areas of technology skills, employment counseling, English as a Second Language, and GED; and family life skills in the areas of nutrition, CPR, drug awareness, and first-aid and emergency training.

In 1994, the Murfreesboro City school system took this change one step further and opened its first year-round school. Cason Lane Academy's 9/3 calendar holds nine-week school sessions and allows for three weeks of vacation, with enrichment classes offered to any and all students during the break period. The year-round calendar has been so successful at Cason Lane, reports Seneker, that three other schools in the system have adopted the calendar, and a district-wide committee is currently studying the possibility of opening other year-round schools in the area.

Does Murfreesboro have the support of the community? A resounding "Yes!" exclaims Peggy Seneker. "Our programs promote phenomenal cooperation among the educators, the community, and the school administration."

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the Murfreesboro City Extended School Program, write or call: Peggy Seneker, Supervisor, Murfreesboro City Extended School Program, 2552 South Church Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37127; Ph: (615) 893-2313; E-Mail: Senekerp@TEN-NASH.TEN.K12.TN.US.

Schools should also be more hospitable to you once teachers are released from the relentless treadmill of today's calendar and the academic day is more attuned to your family's needs.

We know that your aspirations for your children are unlimited, no matter what your circumstances or the difficulties in which you find yourselves are. You can bring those aspirations within reach. We have little to offer other than the advice of experts. But their words bear repeating. Play with your children every day. Read to them every night. Make sure they see a doctor regularly. Take an active interest in the day-to-day activities of the school and the community. Check homework, turn off the television, and make sure that your teenagers are not working so long earning pocket money that they have no time for school. Above all, encourage your children.

What we ask, of course, takes time. But your reward will come as you watch your children become the kind of men and women you know they can be.

To teachers: You are the inheritors of a tradition of service and scholarship stretching back through history. Your first obligation is to that inheritance.

If you accept minimal effort from your students or colleagues or excuse shoddy performance, then you have fallen short, no matter how understandable your reasons. You cannot remain true to the tradition you bear by acquiescing to the social promotion of students who are not prepared for the next step.

Only parents and students have a greater stake than you in this debate. Clearly our proposals will make a huge difference in your working life. The nature of the change, however, remains to be worked out, with your participation. This Commission consciously avoided specifying a precise number of days in the school year, or hours in the school day, because we believe those issues must be worked out district by district and school by school.

Although we insist on breaking down the prison walls, it is not our intention to impose new demands on you without providing the support we know you need. It is up to you and your colleagues to put muscle and sinew on the reform framework outlined in this document. We think you will—not because we recommend it, but because you know it is right. You best understand that we are correct when we say learning is a prisoner of time.

Your satisfaction will lie in a more professional working environment. It will also be found in a lifetime following the progress of adults who achieved their full potential because of what you were able to do with them in the classroom.

Last, we say to students: We know that in the midst of today's pressures, your classes, school, and homework often appear to be distractions from the business of growing up. We were once in your shoes. We, however, were lucky. When we left school, we expected to face a promising future, and for the most part our expectations were met.

***Q** I have heard some discussion about a Chicago Public Schools initiative to end social promotion and strengthen academic achievement. Describe this program and whether or not it has been successful.*[21]

A The Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the third-largest school district in the nation, is currently in its fourth year of a student promotion program that promotes students from the third, sixth, and eighth grades to the next grade level based on their academic achievement and scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). Implemented in 1996, this CPS initiative has endeavored to end social promotion and increase academic achievement through a host of support services, including:

- the "Summer Bridge" program: a comprehensive six-week summer school program for elementary/middle school students;
- Academic Preparatory Center: a program designed to provide extra support for eighth-graders who have not met academic standards but who are too old to remain in elementary school;
- after-school and extended-day programs;
- development of an assessment system for grades K–2, in the hopes of detecting problems as early as possible;
- special education screening;
- free eyeglasses for students with impaired vision;
- and programs designed around students' different learning styles.

The CPS academic promotion policy works as follows: If students in the third, sixth, or eighth grades fail to meet the minimum score on the ITBS, they will be retained—unless they successfully complete the Summer Bridge program—in their current year. If students again fail to meet the minimum ITBS score at the end of the Summer Bridge, they will be placed in a transition-grade program—unless they are age 15 or older, in which case they will be enrolled in the Academic Preparatory Center. Students will again be tested at midyear. If they achieve the necessary score, they will be promoted to the next grade and will take classes during the spring and summer to catch up with their peers.

The Consortium on Chicago School Research, established to measure the effects of the CPS initiative, recently released a report outlining the program's status after the first two years. Although findings are mixed about whether or not retaining students helps them in the long run, and despite criticism by some that data was misrepresented and inconclusive, the Consortium is optimistic that, with more time and effective programs, the number of retained students will continue to decrease and student achievement will increase.

For related topic, see Q&A, p. 19.

[21] Information for the above response was taken from: Chicago Public Schools, "CPS Responds to Report on Social Promotion," CPS News Release (December 15, 1999).

PARENTS

***Q** There are a lot of demands on parents today. As a working parent of three children, how can I help create a "healthy" life for me and my family when everyone is so busy?*

A Perhaps the key is in embracing the role of being a working parent of three children rather than fighting it. This is not to deny its difficulties, but the more we resist what is placed in front of us, the more energy and time is spent in that resistance, which could be better spent on the tasks at hand. Mindfulness of what is present in the immediate time gain can save energy often spent on thoughts of what you should be doing, what you have to do next, and what you should have done earlier. Those are things we cannot control, but the moment at hand we *can* control. The same mindfulness in the workplace keeps one's focus clear and less fraught with anxiety over what cannot be controlled outside of work.

Another key is connection. When transitioning to life at home, spend the first bit of time connecting, relaxing, enjoying each other, and having a snack together before dealing with what has to be done. More lessons are learned and values passed on when children are feeling connected.

Setting priorities is another key. Get to know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses. Say no to requests to help in areas where you are not strong, areas that would not give you energy. Do laundry one or two days a week, rather than some every day. Enlist everyone in the family to help with chores, rather than trying to "do it all." Don't be afraid to call on neighbors and friends for help and support.

And make sure you take time to nurture yourself. Whether it's a yoga class, pottery lessons, or a daily walk, do not leave yourself last on your "to do" list. If you are not taken care of, then neither are your children nor your partner.

You, too, can make good if you are prepared to work at it. You may think your academic success depends on whether or not you are "smart." But academic progress, as our international friends understand, depends on hard work and perseverance. It is your job to learn, to become the "worker" in your own education. You must understand that learning is never a passive activity; it is always active. Your success in school depends primarily on your own diligence. The returns on your efforts will be many, including the satisfaction of knowing that adults who complained about your generation were wrong—and you proved them wrong.

FINANCING: DOLLARS, SCHOLARS, AND TIME

"Time is money," runs an old adage. There is no doubt that the recommendations we have advanced will cost money. We suggest it will be money well spent. In fact, a leading economist suggests that when we consider the costs of day care, the effects of summer learning loss, and the ultimate benefits of increased learning time, we can view any initial costs for such time as an investment with more promising pay-

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offs than most other uses of tax dollars. Where are the funds to come from in a period in which the federal domestic budget is frozen for the next several years, state revenues and outlays are under pressure, and local taxpayers resist higher taxes? The picture in public finance is not optimistic.

But neither is it a disaster. The U.S. today is the wealthiest country in the history of the world. American schools are already handsomely supported by international standards. In constant, inflation-adjusted dollars, real spending on education in America increased 200 percent between 1959 and 1989–90.

We are convinced the American people will support these recommendations if they believe high-quality education will accompany the changes and if educators bring common sense and ingenuity to the table.

The Commission believes priorities need to be set in education funding: all current expenditures should be reallocated to support the academic activities of the school. Education dollars should be spent on academics first and foremost. Budgets should distinguish between education and non-education activities.

At the same time, extending the envelope of the school day and year opens up the possibility of using funds in different ways. Federal compensatory funds, as we have suggested, can be employed to extend the school day and provide summer opportunities for those who require more time. Extended-day and other community services can be supported by other units of state and local government. Moreover, the costs of extended services can be partially met by modest fees, based on parental ability to pay. And costs can be controlled by carefully phasing in new services, using student-teachers and noncertified personnel, and making greater use of full-time staff on flexible schedules.

It should be noted that across the U.S. the ration of adults to enrolled students exceeds 1 to 10, according to data from the National Center for Education Statistics.[22] Surely it is possible to restructure adult use of time so that more teachers and administrators actually encounter students on a daily basis in the classroom, face to face. This does not require additional money.

Throughout this document, the Commission has asked the question: Is there a better way? As these models demonstrate, visionary school leaders in districts of all kinds—large and small, wealthy and poor, urban and rural—are already supporting many of the reforms we advocate. These districts are financing the kinds of changes needed today to anticipate the challenges the future will hold.

Several things are clear from these models. Many different alternative calendars do exist, and they are attuned to local needs. Parental choice is a significant feature of most of these models. Fees for addi-

[22] "Adults" includes district staff, school administrators, teachers, instructional aides, guidance counselors, librarians, and support staff.

tional services are charged in many of these alternative situations. Above all, communities of all kinds face a powerful, pent-up demand for new and different educational services.

In the final analysis, the true costs depend on what we think is important. If we value learning, the cost of "doing it right the first time" is less than the expense involved in "doing it wrong" and having to do it over again. As the American business community now understands full well, in the end, quality costs less.

Facing the Test of Time

Eleven years ago, a small booklet, *A Nation at Risk*, launched one of the great reform movements in American public life. It changed the terms of the education debate by urging education leaders to look beyond the details of schooling to three big issues: time, content, and expectations.

The response was dramatic and sustained. Expectations for student performance have been raised markedly—the public expects more, and so, too, do teachers and principals. Content standards are in the midst of a drastic revision that holds the promise of a world-class education for all.

But learning remains a prisoner of time. The description of the problem contained in *A Nation at Risk* is still true: "Compared to other nations, American students spend less time on school work; and time spent in the classroom and on homework is often used ineffectively." For practical people, reforming expectations and content were thought to be easier problems to solve; time, a more difficult issue to tackle. But in terms of learning, time as an elastic resource is the main road to excellence.

Americans can justifiably take pride in all they have accomplished and are trying to accomplish through their schools. We have built a remarkable system of public education through twelfth grade, universally available to all. We have provided access to postsecondary education at levels matched by no other nation. We have led the world in attending to the needs of the disadvantaged, the dispossessed, and the disabled. We are in the midst of the longest sustained education-reform movement since the common school was created in the nineteenth century.

Today, a new challenge beckons: we must face the test of time. "Time," said Aeschylus 25 centuries ago, "teaches all things." Now at last we must learn its lesson about education: American students will have their best chance at success when they are no longer serving time, but when time is serving them.

UPDATE: *Giving Students and Teachers Greater Control of Time*

THOMAS JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

NEARBY ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA, and Washington, D.C., may be home to popular national landmarks and well-known government agencies, but Alexandria, Virginia, hosts an institution that stands second to none: Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST).

This public school, population 1,600, is unique not only for its solid community-business-school partnership; its outstanding, technologically advanced facilities; its highly qualified staff and motivated and dedicated student body; and its visionary methodologies; it takes "time-on-task" to an entirely different level—a level, according to Principal Geoffrey Jones, that gives students and teachers even greater control of their time.

The TJHSST school day runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3:50 p.m., with the last period dedicated to in-school activities (e.g., tutoring, intramural sports, music, and community projects). In addition to the highly popular "eighth period," and in order to increase time flexibility, reports Jones, "[TJHSST supports] expanded block scheduling and interdisciplinary team-teaching opportunities so classes can meet for at least two double periods, and sometimes triple periods, each week."

Understanding that ideas cannot be properly pursued without adequate time for exploration, this laboratory school, established through business, industry, and local government partnerships, has held time—time for students and time for teachers—at the center of its organization since its inception in 1985. Take, for example, this statement excerpted from a TJHSST school profile about the importance of staff development:

> The underlying premise of staff development at TJHSST is that people learn from others. Ideas come from people and are generated through collaboration and cooperation. The first step toward a good staff development program is to provide teachers with the opportunity to explore new ideas with their students. They need the flexibility and control to be able to experiment in their classrooms.

The statement continues:

> Planning time, both during the day and in the summer, is used by teachers to reflect, analyze, consult, and create. The most productive planning time is spent with others, rather than in isolation. Some good thinking and planning take place in informal or social gatherings, but structured time is essential. We meet in a variety of small groups that reflect the integrated design and delivery of our program. Sometimes teachers meet by discipline, sometimes by team, sometimes by department, and sometimes as a larger "whole" group. The key seems to be frequent dialog with many different people. The focus is on sharing information about ideas.[3]

[3] February 2, 2000, fax transmission from TJHSST Principal Geoffrey Jones.

IS THERE A BETTER WAY?

TJHSST shares its ideas internally and externally through a comprehensive student-teacher mentorship program in which students are placed at over 100 different firms and laboratories in and around Washington. In addition, TJHSST hosts Saturday, summer, and evening enrichment programs for community members and involves students and teachers in various national and international competitions.

TJHSST is dedicated to supporting time, communication, collaboration, and a genuine responsibility toward developing curious, engaged, and well-informed students whose visions will lead us into the future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on TJHSST, please write or call: Geoffrey Jones, Principal, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, 6560 Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22312; Ph: (703) 750-8300; School Website: www.tjhsst.edu.

Deaf Ears to the Last Wake-Up Call

Observations and Comments by

JOHN HODGE JONES, FORMER CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION ON TIME AND LEARNING

Prisoners of Time, the last wake-up call for time reform, has fallen on deaf ears. It is optimistic to conclude any significant progress has been made on reforming time in America's schools as a result of its publication. The 1994 report made a dramatic appeal to law and policy makers, educators, parents, students, and communities to address the use of time in K–12 schools. The Commission felt not only that academic and humanistic concerns of children were at stake but that educational institutions and national security were also at risk. It was hoped the report would set off a wave of reforms similar to those caused by the National Commission on Excellence in Education's 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*; however, such has not occurred. Even though the original 1994 report is now out of print, it continues to receive accolades, and many turn to the Internet for study copies. Yet real education time reform is non-existent.

There are some positive signs; more attention is being given to time reform. At the national level, attention is directed toward social problems among our youth during non-school hours. Funding is increasing for competitive grants, and Title I schools have been encouraged to include after-school activities. Many states have approved funds for additional time directed toward students with academic deficiencies. Locally, more attention is being given to the need for programs before and after school and during breaks and holiday periods. Some entrepreneurs are providing extended time programs. Since leaving the school superintendency in 1997, I have worked with two such efforts, where founders are business leaders who have a genuine interest in the need for time reform. The primary professional organization bearing this banner for time reform is the National Association for Year-Round Education, who frequently refers to the *Prisoners of Time* report as it carries its mission across the nation and around the world. Currently, there are over two million students enrolled in schools with alternative calendars and schedules, and the Association

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is now advancing comprehensive time reform, an idea presented in *Prisoners of Time*.

But this former NECTL chair admits disappointment and cynicism with the lack of attention and real progress being made on education time reform. "If you can wait and not be tired of waiting" seems to have run its course. Patience is not a reformer's virtue. The hodge-podge and disconnected efforts, bureaucratic implementation, vested interests, tradition, and status quo all prohibit obvious changes needed for learning in America. It appears progress does not take place because time reform is too simple and does not cost enough. The demand for research, though now plentiful, appears to be a stalling tactic to support vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Thus, many children across America are driven into a downward spiral of frustration and failure by our demands for standards—standards implemented without creating a new, extended-time umbrella, which would allow students to learn at a pace fitting their needs. Other children are bored by the lack of individual attention in spite of huge investments in technology and lower teacher/student ratios. It is little wonder we are experiencing the violence, discontent, and dislike for formal education from many youths. To them, school is a punishment, failure is the sentence, and there is no joy in learning.

The following observations indicate how little attention has been given to time reform, a foundation that is necessary for learning to take place:

- All levels of government—national, state, and local—have failed to address the issue of time as a systematic whole. When time is addressed, it appears in tangential projects.
- The standards movement has done nothing to create a new time environment that could allow goal attainment. Accountability and assessment assume all minds can grow to full maturity at the same pace and in the same climate.
- Attitudes of the "professionals" in our schools are not changing; there is much evidence that time is designed and used for the convenience of the "professionals" rather than the learning needs and welfare of children.
- Tradition remains a strong barrier against time changes, as indicated by the fact that charters, vouchers, independent and private schools, and site-based schools have done little to implement fundamental time reform.
- Many districts experience an "ex-superintendent virus," which erodes any progress made in time reform when changes in leadership occur.
- In spite of taxpayer protest against an increase in taxes, there appears to be little awareness that schools could be more efficient

and serviceable by developing schedules that fit with the modern home and workplace. "Second-shift" schools to accommodate homes where parents work late afternoons and evenings are nonexistent. Likewise, Saturday and Sunday schedules have not been established for children whose parents work weekends.

- Large monetary investments are being made in school facilities, campuses, equipment, materials, and especially technology, but utility, accountability and different approaches to learning and scheduling are slow to change.
- Time is rarely made available for *full* student involvement in after-school activities, including sports, but competitive athletics, participated in by a small minority, remains the dominant driving force in most communities.
- The best "ideas of mice and men" are allowed to be squelched by one loud protester at all governing levels.
- Research and what we know about how the brain learns and the timeframe for learning are largely ignored.
- Reliance on grants is an illusion and may be counterproductive. Project continuation and replication are not sustainable based on one-time revenue sources. Better utility of current resources and sustainable funding coupled with strong leadership are lacking.
- Leadership has failed to recognize the financial resources available in parents' willingness to pay for child care for school-age children. Further, little attention is given to better utilization of personnel by reevaluating position funding and implementing flextime for personnel. Pupil transportation has become the "tail that wags the dog," and few leaders ask, "Why not use funds for extended-time programs and allow parents to deliver and pick up children as they go to and from work?"
- School specialists and support positions, acting as pull-out programs, frequently interfere and disrupt core instruction when time is confined to six hours per day, 180 days per year.
- Little effort is made to bring all youth service providers under one roof in order to provide well-coordinated academic, enrichment, athletic, and recreational activities for all children.
- Time is used inefficiently at the beginning and ending of each school year. The last three weeks of school are spent "closing down," while the first six weeks are used to review and "get acquainted." Little, if any, learning is taking place during these nine weeks.

Some critics believe that *Prisoners of Time* provided a simple yet poignant and dramatic appeal to increase and better utilize time for

learning in America. They also claim the Commission "dropped the ball" in failing to provide greater specificity directly addressing the problem. The above observations and comments may validate their criticisms. However, these observations should be turned into recommendations. Whatever the case, Rip van Winkle would still be comfortable with most school clocks and calendars. As we move further into the twenty-first century, with great challenges and high expectations, much still belongs to the era that is "gone with the wind." It is my hope that *Prisoners of Time* is not the last wake-up call. A wave of time reform must lap up on the beaches of America's educational institutions and revolutionize their governance, giving freedom to their inhabitants to learn in an environment of peace and tranquility, being free from the shackles of time.

John Hodge Jones, former chairman of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning, served for fifteen years as the superintendent of Murfreesboro City Schools in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. During his tenure as superintendent, he became internationally known for his school reform efforts, was named 1996–1997 Superintendent of the Year by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and developed the prototype school, Cason Lane Academy. Jones is widely published, serves on numerous boards of various educational organizations, and continues to be an active advocate and consultant for time and personnel reform in America's schools. He can be reached at johnhj4768@aol.com.

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Changing Society

Children's Defense Fund. *Yearbook 2000: The State of America's Children*. Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 2000. *The State of America's Children* provides frank commentary and hard statistics on the following issues: family income, children's health, child-care education, children and families, and juvenile justice and youth development. Comprehensive appendices chart various national and state statistics, including information on poverty, health care, unemployment rates among juveniles, public school education, and teen birth rates. Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, writes a passionate, eye-opening foreword, a veritable call-to-action no reader can ignore. Complete index. [158 pp.]

Stratton, Julia. *How Students Have Changed: A Call to Action for Our Children's Future*. Arlington, Va.: American Association of School Administrators, 1995. This 40-page booklet reports statistics, cites research, and solicits comments from leading educators about how students have changed since the 1960s. Superintendent of the Year finalists pinpoint major changes in the following ten areas: rise of dysfunctional families; influence of technology in the home, school, and workplace; threat of crime, violence, ignorance, and poverty; the changing community and diversity; media influence and information exchange; questioning of authority figures, traditions, and responsibilities; lack of community in today's hurried world; greater knowledge demanded in the workplace; different learning styles and their effect on classroom instruction; peer influence. Stratton provides suggested solutions for problem areas and stresses that everyone has a responsibility to ensure a positive school and life experience for every student. [40 pp.]

Multiage and Looping

Forsten, Char, Jim Grant, and Irv Richardson. *The Looping Evaluation Book*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1999. Contains detailed, reproducible checklists for the exploration, implementation, and evaluation of multiyear concepts. Substantiated by sup-

port pages, which include a comprehensive reading/Internet resource list and parent-connection letters, this book will appeal to all teachers new to or experienced with looping practices. References and recommended resources. [K–6; 86 pp.]

— *The Multiage Evaluation Book*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1999. Contains detailed, reproducible checklists for the exploration, implementation, and evaluation of multiyear concepts. Substantiated by support pages, which include a comprehensive reading/Internet resource list and parent-connection letters, this book will appeal to all teachers new to or experienced with multiage practices. References and recommended resources. [K–6; 86 pp.]

Forsten, Char, Jim Grant, Bob Johnson, and Irv Richardson. *Looping Q&A: 72 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1996. Contains seventy-two reproducible questions and answers on the practice of looping, including what looping is, the benefits of looping, and how looping affects students and teachers. Recommended resources and index. [K–8; 148 pp.]

Grant, Jim, and Bob Johnson. *A Common Sense Guide to Multiage Practices*. Columbus, Ohio: Teachers' Publishing Group, 1995. This realistic book provides sound rationale for creating multiage groupings. Includes practical, straightforward information to help you select a multiage configuration that is right for you. Recommended resources. [K–3; 124 pp.]

—, comps. *The Multiage Handbook: A Comprehensive Resource for Multiage Practices*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1996. This book's in-depth profiles of thirteen successful multiage schools across the country contain information that would take a curriculum team hundreds of hours to develop. Topics covered include problem-solving methods, developmentally appropriate practices, curriculum, theme development, and use of specialists (art, music, phys. ed.), plus philosophy and strengths of multiage classrooms. Recommended resources and index. [K–8 288 pp.]

Grant, Jim, Bob Johnson, and Irv Richardson. *The Looping Handbook: Teachers and Students Progressing Together*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1996. Presents the benefits of looping, and provides profiles of a number of looping classes of different grade levels. The book also discusses parent input and parent relations, in addition to potential problems with looping and possible solutions to these problems. Bibliography and index. [K–8; 148 pp.]

— *Our Best Advice: The Multiage Problem Solving Handbook*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1996. Written in concise yet informative one- to two-page responses to some of the most pressing multiage issues and placed in an easy-to-read format, this

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

handbook discusses how to avoid pitfalls and ensure success when implementing and managing a multiage program. Among those topics covered: staff development, planning, student selection, parent-teacher issues, curriculum, inclusion, dissension, and community relations. Honestly confronts the problems often encountered by educators around the country as they try to implement and manage their multiage programs and offers solid, practical advice on how to deal with these issues. Bibliography and index. [K–8; 112 pp.]

— *Multiage Q&A: 101 Practical Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions* (K–8). Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1997. Contains 101 reproducible questions and answers on the practice of multiage, including questions parents might have, impact of a multiage configuration, and steps on how to implement a multiage classroom. Recommended resources and index. [K–8; 148 pp.]

Rathbone, Charles, Anne Bingham, Peggy Dorta, Molly McClaskey, and Justine O'Keefe. *Multiage Portraits: Teaching and Learning in Mixed-Age Classrooms*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1993. Presents the inside view of what happens in multiage classrooms as seen through the eyes of children and teachers. This book captures the power and magic of classrooms not dictated by bells and curriculum guides but by the natural inquisitiveness of kids, the creative support of teachers, and the mutual respect necessary for meaningful schooling. [K–4; 185 pp.]

Poverty

Payne, Ruby K. *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. Rev. ed. Baytown, Tex.: RFT Publishing, 1998. *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, divided into nine chapters, explores the following topics: definitions of resources (e.g., emotional, financial, mental, physical) as applied to people of all economic classes (defined as lower, middle, and upper); how language and story differ according to economic status—the five registers of language; the "hidden rules" commonly associated with each economic class; characteristics of generational poverty (i.e., a familiy's living in poverty for two or more generations); the importance of role models, emotional resources, and support systems; how discipline differs across the economic classes—the child voice, adult voice, and parent voice, and the relation of each to development; strategies on how to improve the achievement of students living in poverty; and how important, genuine, and supportive relationships can help students of poverty succeed.

Throughout the book, Payne includes enlightening scenarios (actual stories/people with which she has come in contact) and questions that force the reader to take a deeper look at all three economic classes and their relationship to one another. In addi-

tion, at the conclusion of each chapter, she includes suggestions on how schools can incorporate the information and strategies discussed in individual chapters into the classroom and the overall school environment. Statistical charts, research notes, and a complete bibliography are included. [205 pp.]

Shermon, Arloc. *Poverty Matters: The Cost of Child Poverty in America*. Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1997. The author divides this book into five chapters: "The Odds Against Poor Children"; "Can Ending Poverty Really Help?"; "Economic Costs of Children's Poverty: Updated Statistics"; "Why Does Poverty Hurt Children?"; and "How to End Child Poverty." In addition, Shermon includes key findings and recommendations for helping families of poverty gain the resources they need to lead healthy, economically viable, and successful lives. [44 pp.]

SCHOOL READINESS/GRADE-LEVEL RETENTION

Grant, Jim. *"I Hate School!" Some Common-Sense Answers for Educators and Parents Who Want to Know Why and What to Do about It*. Rev. ed. Rosemont, N.J.: Modern Learning Press, 1994. Explains the readiness dilemma faced by countless students, teachers, and parents in the 1990s, and provides practical, proven solutions, such as time-flexibility options and multiage groupings. Checklists and summaries of stress-related signals can help adults identify children suffering from an incorrect grade placement. Bibliography. [134 pp.]

— *Retention and Its Prevention: Making Informed Decisions about Individual Children*. Rosemont, N.J.: Modern Learning Press, 1997. Explains how retention can be avoided and how it can be implemented successfully; which children are likely to benefit from retention and which are not; and factors that should be considered when evaluating the needs and circumstances of any child who might benefit from additional learning time. In an age of high standards and high-stakes decisions, it will provide vital assistance for educators, parents, and children. Bibliography. [K–6; 144 pp.]

Grant, Jim, and Bob Johnson. *Kindergarten* and *First Grade Readiness Checklists*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1997. Comprehensive evaluation tools that involve participation from parents and teachers alike. These checklists, filled out by parents, provide a logical framework for determining each child's readiness for kindergarten and first grade. Includes questions on previous educational background, general knowledge, and physical, emotional, and social development. Teacher's Guides help the reader interpret checklists and identify possible problem areas; they also provide suggestions on instructional support systems. Includes suggested reading for parents. (Spanish versions also available.) [Checklists: 11 pp.; Teacher's Guides: 16 pp.]

Grant, Jim, and Irv Richardson. *The Retention/Promotion Checklist*. Peterborough, N.H.: Crystal Springs Books, 1998. A highly detailed, practical document designed to help you identify whether an individual child should be promoted to the next grade level or retained. Packed with supporting text and appendices, the checklist questions shed light on the critical issues you must consider during this process. Bibliography. [K–6; 96 pp.]

Uphoff, James K. *Real Facts from Real Schools: What You're Not Supposed to Know about School Readiness and Transition Programs*. Rev. ed. Rosemont, N.J.: Modern Learning Press, 1995. Uphoff explores the benefits of providing struggling primary-grade students with an extra-year learning option. The first section of *Real Facts* takes a look at readiness and transition programs, starting with the 1950s and finishing with the 1990s; the second section uncovers the inaccuracies of attacks made against such programs and provides guidelines against which to measure extra-year options; and the third section consolidates and presents more than 50 research studies on readiness and transition programs. Recommended resources. [154 pp.]

Standards

Grant, Jim. *Developmental Education in an Era of High Standards*. Rosemont, N.J.: Modern Learning Press, 1998. This succinct, reproducible question-and-answer format covers the day-to-day issues that educators and parents alike face. Issues discussed include readiness, curriculum, assessment, and special needs. In addition, this book addresses the larger issues related to high standards, such as additional learning time, retention, and the school reform process itself. Bibliography. [K–4; 93 pp.]

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Tucker, Marc S., and Judy B. Codding. *Standards for Our Schools: How to Set Them, Measure Them, and Reach Them*. San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998. Co-authored by the president and vice president of the National Center on Education and the Economy, this practical text discusses the standards movement, why it is important, and how educators can help students meet and exceed standards in a standards-based instructional system. Tucker and Codding hope to empower educators and students alike by providing strategies on how to change the archaic system that exists today. They feel that students and educators should be held accountable when endeavoring to meet high expectations, but only after these students and educators have been exposed to the knowledge, taught the skills, and given the resources needed to succeed. Bibliography. [349 pp.]

Time and Learning

Bruno, James E. *It's About Time: Leading School Reform in an Era of Time Scarcity*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, Inc., 1997. Bruno explores the psychosocial perspective of time and the challenges it presents in teachers' lives and school reform. He argues that teachers' perception of time changes as they age, which, if not addressed in a healthy environment, can lead to teacher burnout and slowed reform efforts. Five major themes Bruno investigates include: Time Investment—the different ways teachers use their time to attain personal goals; Temporal Orientation—how teachers orient themselves to the past, the present, and the future; Sense of Time Passage—how the value of time changes for teachers as they age; Engagement and Participation Motivation—why teachers participate in school reform; and Time Clock Orientation—how the cyclical school clock interacts with the teachers' linear clock. Bruno includes strategies, chapter summaries, and discussion points to help spark further discussion among educators about time, learning, and school reform. [170 pp.]

Wood, Chip. *Time to Teach, Time to Learn: Changing the Pace of School*. Greenfield, Mass.: Northeast Foundation for Children, 1999. In *Time to Teach, Time to Learn*, Chip Wood, educator, author, consultant, and co-founder of The Northeast Foundation For Children and The Greenfield Center School, addresses how the inappropriate pace of teaching and learning decreases the quality of education and, in the long term, life. In today's competitive and sometimes hostile and unrealistic standards-driven environment, Wood argues that the public and political call for accountability and time-on-task behavior appears to have overshadowed what students and teachers really need: time to wonder and explore individually and communally; time to develop at one's natural pace; and time to embrace the challenge of learning far beyond "the next test."

Time to Teach, Time to Learn is divided into three sections. In "Foundations," Wood explores issues current in education today

(e.g., the standards movement) against the research and knowledge of how children grow. In "Observations," he investigates a typical school day in the life of a first-grade boy and a seventh-grade girl by attending classes with each student. And in "Transformations," Wood discusses changes that school administrations can make; changes teachers can make in their approach to teaching, and strategies of how to better use time. In addition, Wood describes a school of the future—one in which time meets the developmental needs of all students, and one in which social and academic learning are integrated. This is a thoughtful and intelligent look at what needs to happen if teachers and students are to succeed. Bibliography. [1–8; 322 pp.]

Recommended Resources and Organizations

Crystal Springs Books
75 Jaffrey Road
PO Box 500
Peterborough, NH 03458
1-800-321-0401
www.crystalsprings.com

Crystal Springs Books distributes quality professional books, cassettes/CDs, videos, and supplementary materials for PreK–8 educators.

Customized Training Services
10 Sharon Road
PO Box 577
Peterborough, NH 03458
1-800-924-9621
www.sde.com

Customized Training Services brings quality onsite training directly to your school, district, or service center. Training is tailored to meet your specific training needs and is scheduled on dates convenient for the inquiring school, district, or organization.

SDE
10 Sharon Road
PO Box 577
Peterborough, NH 03458
1-800-924-9621
www.sde.com

SDE provides professional development seminars, national conferences, regional conferences, and grade-specific state conventions for PreK–Grade 8 educators.

Changing Family/ Changing Society

The Annie E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul St.
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 547-6600
Internet: www.aecf.org

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4301 Connecticut Avenue NW #100
Washington, DC 20008-2304
(202) 362-5580
Internet: www.childtrends.org

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Journey North: www.learner.org/jnorth

U.S. Distance Learning Association: www.usdla.org

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119 N. Payne St.
Alexandria, VA 2231
(703) 683-6232

The Parent Institute: www.parent-institute.com

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Testing

Fair Test
National Center for Fair and Open Testing
342 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139-9745

Time and Learning

Northeast Foundation for Children
71 Montague City Rd.
Greenfield, MA 01301
1-800-360-6332
www.responsiveclassroom.org

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National Association of Year-Round Education
PO Box 711386
San Diego, CA 92171-1386
(619) 276-5296
web site: www.nayre.org
e-mail: info@nayre.org

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NOTES

Prisoners of Time is a thoughtful, highly readable report on the relationship of time with learning. After digesting its contents, the professional educator is hard pressed to justify current usage and organization of in-school time. Staff Development for Educators is providing a service to the educational community in reprinting this document.

—CHARLES BALLINGER, *Executive Director, National Association of Year-Round Education*

Our schools have been organized and operated on false assumptions, ones that have institutionalized passive learning and countered what we know about human development and learning. This report is a bold call to break out of the prison defined by clock and calendar. For the sake of our youth and our nation, it must be heeded.

—JOHN H. LOUNSBURY, *National Middle Level Education Leader*

In 1994, the National Education Commission on Time and Learning published an eye-opening study about time, learning, and the state of education in the United States—*Prisoners of Time*. Expanded and updated for 2000 by Staff Development for Educators (SDE), *Prisoners of Time: Too Much to Teach; Not Enough Time to Teach It* includes the Commission's original report and adds to it over thirty Q&A's, written by educators across the nation, that address a variety of critical issues in education today. In addition, updated statistics offer readers an honest view into the conditions under which students and educators work each day. Selected school profiles feature learning institutions whose unique educational programs and skillful use of time serve as inspirational examples of how time and learning, when brought together around the needs of students and educators, can best serve the educational community and, more widely, the nation. Finally, the Selected Annotated Bibliography and the Recommended Resources and Organizations List offer valuable information on school reform and related topics.

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"Time," said Aeschylus 25 centuries ago, "teaches all things." Now at last we must learn its lesson about education: American students will have their best chance at success when they are no longer serving time, but when time is serving them.

—from *Prisoners of Time*

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